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North American Review

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Raymond Federman:
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City Lights in North Dakota

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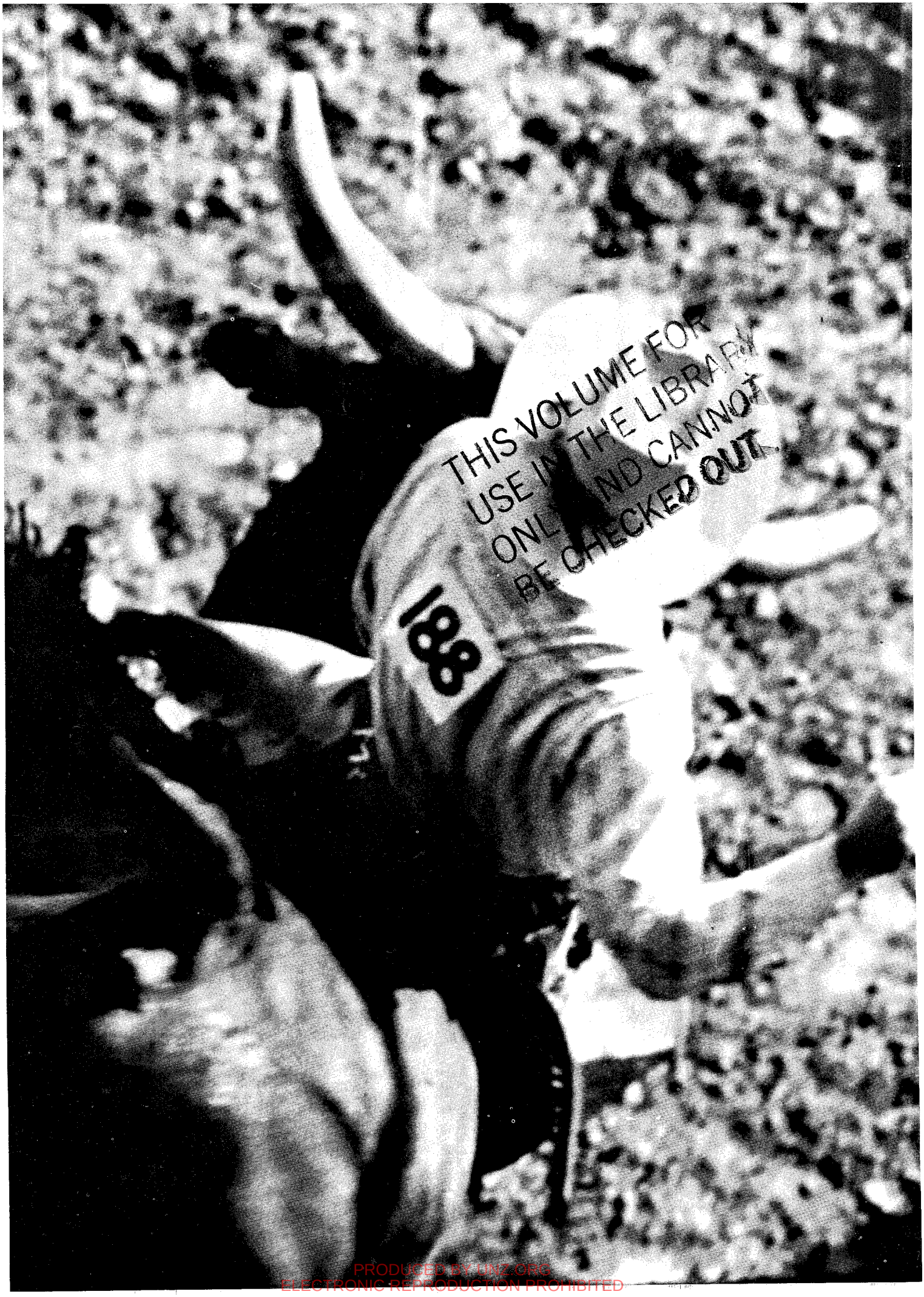

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The North American Review

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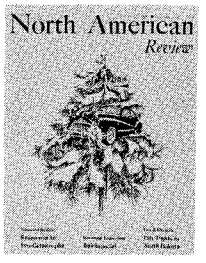
ABOUT THIS ISSUE

After our spring number appeared, a fellow wrote in to say that his first reading of John Rodman's "The Dolphin Papers" had "shredded" his brain—but that he was game for a second try. We take that as a compliment. Robert Frost used to call it "rumpling", rather than shredding, but it comes to the same thing: some lessons demand more mental attention than others, and most of us—heaven help us—have allowed our heads to get progressively more lazy as our surroundings have become more *civilized*. What passes for deep thought nowadays frequently turns out to be a kind of elevated kicking and thrashing, a high-toned shadow-boxing with problems whose substance eludes us.

By way of illustration: It has taken us a couple of years to discover what this magazine is really *about* when it is not simply—and narrowly—about literary matters. It's been a long haul, and it's taken the work not only of John Rodman, but of Joe Meeker and Paul Shepard and Arne Naess and Dave Crownfield and Barry Lopez and, in this issue, of Sigmund Kvaløy—thoughtful writers who tug at our sleeves and say: Listen, the world is going wrong; here is how it got this way; here is what must be done. Beginning on page 16, Kvaløy discusses "responses" to ecological catastrophe—taking issue as he does so with such commentators as McLuhan, Fuller, and Marcuse—and makes it perfectly clear that we can no longer salve our consciences by recycling newspapers and bottles, or otherwise *adapting* to the wasting away of the world's resources. His essay is, perhaps, another brain-shredder for our readers—but also, we hope, worth a second reading. A bibliography to the article is available: send us a self-addressed, stamped envelope.



Incidentally, Kvaløy is another of a growing list of men and women who *live* their interests as well as write about them. He has recently been in Nepal, living in Sherpa society (for reasons made clear by his article), though he is on the staff of the University of Oslo.

Peter Marshall's examination of the British General Election (p. 8) may be more thorough than many readers might wish, but its muchness is an illusion—brought on, we believe, by an excessive turnover of governments in the Western world recently. Marshall teaches American Studies at Manchester University.

An aside: The National Endowment for the Arts has announced laying more than three-quarters of a million dollars on 154 writers in the United States—a lot of cash, a lot of writers. As always, some bad writers will have been overpaid, and some good writers will be demoralized by so much bread, and in the end it will not make any difference to posterity whether the government subsidized the arts or not. Still, having money is perhaps the second-best pleasure of modern life (a pejorative phrase), and the NAR offers congratulations to its own contributors—eighteen of them—as a kind of interest-added and of warning-sent. The committees which pass out grants have nor taste nor standards nor vision, but even a committee gets lucky once in awhile.

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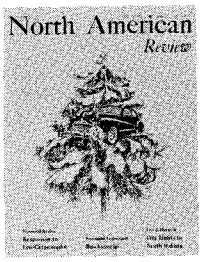

Barry Lopez

Going Down with the Bulls

Pendleton lies in wheat country in the northeastern corner of Oregon, in a depression in the rolling, treeless plain between the Blue Mountains and the Columbia River. Named for an Ohio Senator (whose wife was the daughter of Francis Scott Key), it began life as a crossing on the Umatilla River, on the old Oregon Trail. Now it's a town of 13,500, a county seat and trading center for local wheat ranchers, irrigation farmers and woolgrowers. When tourists come through on Interstate 80 they ask to see the famous Pendleton Woolen Mill and the Harris Pine Mills, the Seventh Day Adventist operation that supplies Montgomery Ward with all its unfinished furniture.

Umatilla county residents are generally conservative people, advocates of law and order solutions to life's complexities; they like country and western music, Kiwanis, sandwich meats, high school football and the progress that comes with hard work. They do not like hippies or long hair (except on their own sons, but only while they are in high school) and believe women's liberation is a moot issue because most of the girls can not only drive a pickup but a combine as well. The upper middle class social fabric is a warp of Texas-style land pride and gentility (as in "going out to the club to eat a little steak and sip a little whiskey") and a weft of all that is thought to be good and bad in the South: neighborliness, well-bred families, churching, hard-nosed provincialism and racism. The western designs in the fabric include the Indian as nigger, a slightly fiercer style of independence, the social life that goes with horses and square dancing, and the operative folklore of a ranching and logging life.

Pendleton is home to a gunsmith who holds national and world's records in the light varmint class of bench rifle competition, and, just outside of town, lives the Oregon State Women's Bowling Champion. A lot of Umatilla county farmers who operate on six figure bank accounts never went to high school, and like to tell you that. You can uncover, with no effort, stories about how some longhair got beaten to death in the Silver Saddle Bar, told by someone from Iowa who had never been there. But there are better things to do in Pendleton. One of them is going to the rodeo, the Annual Pendleton Round-Up and Happy Canyon Pageant.

* * *

The Pendleton Round-Up was one of the biggest of the 567 rodeos held in the United States and Canada last year. Three thousand cowboys tried to make a living rodeoing; untold millions came to watch the effort. A few cowboys made over $25,000 last year, but most of them made just enough money to cover gas, hotdogs, and cheap hotels on the road. It's a tight, bitter, hard-assed sport for, perhaps, the last of the outriders; it tears muscles and breaks bones and wears you out before you're thirty-five. Like mountain climbing it's private; for that reason, and because it's difficult to con a 2000 pound Brahma bull, rodeo is still virtually free of big-time sports corruption.

The first Pendleton rodeo was held in 1910, after the wheat had been harvested and everyone was looking around to blow off a little steam. Things got rolling pretty well and in the forties and fifties the Pendleton Round-Up was considered one of the big North American rodeos, along with Cheyenne Frontier Days in Wyoming and the Calgary Stampede in Alberta. Today it's still one of about twenty big American and Canadian rodeos and it always draws sellout crowds of 45,000 for its week-long spectacle in the second week in September.

Motels boost their rates and sell out months in advance. Camper trucks, motor homes, and travel trailers (for a $2 fee payable at the county courthouse thank you) cover the high school grounds, city parks and vacant lots. The Wally Byam caravan of silver Airstream trailers — 200 strong — sprawls across the lawn at Eastern Oregon Hospital, in 1973 for the ninth year in a row. A seedy crew of tattooed thumpers sets up a midway on Main Street; beer comes into town, truck after truck of it; the police gear up for the influx of pickpockets and motel burglars; the rodeo groupies with their crotch pinching jeans and bullet-tight tits can tell you where anyone worth knowing is staying. The Indians move into Indian Village out at the rodeo grounds, like Japanese-Americans moving into a detention center during the Second World War. Late at night the cowboys, the real ones, the ones who are going to ride the next day, are punching thin pillows in thin-walled motels and worrying if they'll get a decent ride, sixty points or more, on the animal they've drawn for the next day's ride. Their drugstore counterparts are out at the Silver Saddle Bar and the Westward

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Ho Bar and Indian Hills Bar imagining things, possessing their women in the western flex of a macho culture, snorting a little in the smokey din of live country and western music. They long for that big connection, the unarguable link between a man and a jackknifing Brahma bull, the finality of a contest where there are rules, time limits, winners and losers and something's proven; but for now these uptight drugstore cowboys settle for another cigarette, another beer, one more dance with Bobbi Lu in the twangy glare and let that music suture, suture, suture the little rips in the psyche.

* * *

The first three days at the arena are given over to a series of "go-rounds," a process of elimination that pits cowboys against the clock and each other and whittles 343 contestants down to 75 to compete on Saturday in the finals of six different events.

On the second day of go-rounds Brian Claypool of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada, sits down on a catwalk over the corrals to talk. He is 19. His mother and father are up there in the stands somewhere and he says he really likes to ride for them because they get such a kick out of it. They have driven down 800 miles from home because two days before in Lewiston, Idaho, Brian had a fantastic ride on a bull and won the event there and Mr. and Mrs. Claypool liked that, that things were going well for their son.

Brian has had good rides on both a saddle bronc and a bull and will be in the finals in both events. Last year he won the Bull Riding Championship here at Pendleton. He is about 5′8″ tall and weighs around 160 pounds, like most cowboys who ride bulls and horses.

He talks about keeping himself psychologically honed and the intense concentration it takes — in addition to the physical skills of agility, rhythm and anticipation — to stay on a bull for the required eight seconds. He reflects, as do most good riders, a steeled but inoffensive self-confidence and a savvy about psychological needs and the psychological pits he himself could fall into that is, well, incredible in someone who is only 19. He talks, too, of the old days when a champion wouldn't give a newcomer cracking out on his first bull two words of encouragement or advice. Now the cowboys at the top tend to talk with the up-and-comers because they are all in it together; there are only a handful still power-tripping on their incomes and world point standings.

Brian wants to see rodeo change, for cowboys to start making money at it, to not have to ride for the same purses they rode for ten years ago while the gate receipts have gone up and up. Last year he rode 200 bulls in 140 rodeos just to make a little more than ends meet, and he's one of the better bull riders in winnings. He'd like to see major advertisers donate money to rodeo purses in exchange for a rodeo's endorsing their product. "Then you wouldn't have to ride yourself bald before you were thirty trying to make a living. You have to ride so many bulls for so many little purses. Can you imagine psyching yourself up for 200 rides every year?"

He is proud to be his own trainer, road manager, and booking agent; he reflects the integrity that comes from a sport where you're perfectly alone. He is a different breed of cowboy, too, from those who rode in the '40s and '50s. He's investing his money and planning ahead, as cowboys before him didn't. He plans to go to rodeos by plane and make, maybe, $100,000, as most rodeo cowboys of the past have not. "You've got to have a noodle in this business now," he says, and you shake his hand and wish him well. You sense he will go on his way as inexorably as a river, under his own control, in that brutal dance with the bulls. It is not his success that the drugstore cowboys envy; it is not the physical conditioning, the resilience that lets him come back after a crushed spleen in a bad trampling; it's his ability to make contact, to force his life. He prevails, he does not endure.

* * *

Harry Vold is one of two rodeo stock contractors for the Pendleton Round-Up. He supplies horses for the bareback and saddle bronc events and bulls for the bull rides. It is a little before eight on a Thursday morning and he has just finished cutting out the animals for the day's rides and penning them up under the north grandstands. Now he walks out through the corrals, talking about his stock. We hang over a fence and he points, with some pride, to a horse named Necklace who at first glance looks like all the other horses in the corral. But she can leap six feet in the air and twist two ways at once. Four times World's Champion Bareback Horse. At the rodeo in Madison Square Garden last year he was offered $10,000 for her.

(In the rodeo riding events — bull riding, saddle bronc and bareback — your score for a ride is the sum of two scores: your own points out of a possible 50 and the animal's out of a possible 50. A horse as good as Necklace, if she's having a good day, can give a good rider, also having a good day, an exceptional ride, say in the high eighties.)

A good horse, says Harry, will run about 1200 pounds and, although he breeds bucking horses on his Colorado ranch, he isn't really sure what else makes a good bucking horse. The best bulls he has are crosses between Brahmas and Herefords, called Brahfords, with a little Mexican fighting bull thrown in to insure he'll hook with his blunted horns.

Harry is in his late forties and he is beginning to develop a common western physique, one built around the horse and the pickup truck: broad shouldered and bull strengthed with a tiny butt and a beer belly; the horse, or pickup, provides the speed and agility the body no longer has (or needs). Like everyone else, Harry wears a cowboy hat and sunglasses and when he takes them off, for a moment, he looks like another person.

The question of cruelty to animals is inevitable and we slide into talking about it with no trouble; he does not bluster his way to the defensive like a man who doesn't know what he's talking about. He doesn't even sigh,

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though it is, perhaps, the weakest and most worn-out question in rodeo. Harry Vold makes his living on how well his stock performs in the arena; if his animals are trucked around in open vans in the rain and snow, ridden too often, given dirty hay and no grain and no medical attention, they do not perform and Harry's reputation — and his contracts — begin to suffer. So he treats his stock well, as well as a trainer treats a prize fighter. This is not to say there are not cretins working for people like Vold who enjoy popping a bull's eye blind with the tip of a whip or goosing an animal with an electric cattle prod ten or twelve times to get him to rear up in the chutes and give the crowd a thrill. The famous flank strap, however, that is supposed to pinch a horse's testicles (which are difficult to find on a mare like Necklace) is no worse than a belt pulled too tight. It's pulled tight for the ride, about ten or fifteen seconds, and then a pickup man leans over and throws a quick release buckle and the thing falls off. It makes the animal kick higher and harder, as a person who is irritated and wants to get a half-loose boot off his foot would.

The legitimate complaint of those who do not like to see animals hurt in rodeo is an event called steer roping, or steer busting. It's an event Pendleton is famous for, but as a rodeo attraction it may be doomed. In this event a roper drops a loop over a steer's horns, loops the rope around the steer's butt, and takes off at a 45° angle. The snap delivered to the animal's head is supposed to knock him out. It sometimes breaks a horn off, or it may break the steer's neck and kill him.

Harry Vold isn't too hot on steer busting. He's more concerned about keeping his mares and his geldings in separate corrals so they don't fight, cutting and bruising each other. But he likes Pendleton because, he says, it never changes, and too many things in this world, Harry believes, are changing too goddamn fast.

* * *

The thing that makes the Pendleton Round-Up unique for tourists is its much publicized Indian pageantry. It is also what makes the Pendleton Round-Up one of the last great racist spectacles in America. As Harry Vold observed, the Pendleton Round-Up and Happy Canyon Pageant hasn't changed much since 1910.

In 1914, a rancher named Roy Raley wrote a thin history of the West that beggars the imagination for an adequate description of its distortion, its fabrication, its bigotry and its embrace of the doctrine of manifest destiny. The history was first staged as an outdoor play with a cast of hundreds and came to be known as the Happy Canyon Pageant. You can still see it today, virtually unchanged, each night after the rodeo in an enormous outdoor theatre adjacent to the arena.

Most of the roles in the show have been passed down in the family of the original performer, some through a third generation. The Indians involved in it are more interested in the prestige the roles carry in some white and Indian circles than they are in the play. There are no full rehearsals; there is only a crude sense of timing and pacing and it is all rather loosely organized, a concession to a sometimes inebriated Indian cast.

The show opens on a 200-foot wide, triple-tiered stage with a man and woman imitating Nelson Eddy and Jeanette McDonald singing *Indian Love Call*, a role the man's performed for the past 28 years. The play goes on to paint a drab, savage (and theatrically boring) life-style enjoyed by pre-white Indian America, continues with the first white-Indian contact — four explorers rush out to help Sacajawea who's tripped over a twig — and the first Indian-white contact — the kidnapping, pummelling and public abuse of a blonde, blue-eyed, little white girl. The rest of the show is given over to a righteous destruction of the Indians, an almost religious adoration of the first settlers, a lot of juvenile gun-nut antics and, finally, a sort of frontier vaudeville show complete with bar girls flashing a little gartered thigh and Stepin Fetchit Chinese laundrymen. Toward the end of the show, which has by now become a sort of revue, a mounted quadrille of men and women square dance on horseback, and to finish the performance an Indian in breechclout thunders out onto the set with a huge American flag, gallops up to the stage's third tier and, as he trots briskly to a high point on a prancing horse, we fade out with the national anthem.

The crowd enjoys it and for this reason, says the director, they don't change it. If you were in the right frame of mind you might conceivably lie limp in your seat with the impact of the time warp.

Over a thousand Indians — Cayuse, Nez Perce, Walla Walla, Colville, Shoshone, Coeur d'Alene — live in 250 tepees behind the north grandstand during Round-Up week. They are given the space free (after securing a tepee permit) by the Round-Up committee along with a supply of meat and bread. They must apply for additional permits to do almost anything else, from selling a string of beads to a tourist to riding a horse in a parade. They are generally expected to be well-behaved, photogenic, ambulatory curios for the pleasure of the tourists, the ones who make the Pendleton Round-Up and Happy Canyon Pageant pay off every year. It's a system iron-fisted by a staff of rodeo directors and enforced by long-resident Apples, or Indian Uncle Toms.

The rodeo's so-called Indian Events border on the ludicrous, are more or less rigged, and are staged primarily for the benefit of the tourists. For example: Lawanda Bronson wins the 1973 Junior American Indian Beauty Contest. Her father, Virgil, is a half-breed grown rich raising horses on Indian land. And it is he and his family and their purebred horses who sweep the Indian riding events at the rodeo every day. Needless to say, Virgil is well-liked by the white folks.

The judges for the Junior American Indian Beauty Contest, all white, include: a cowboy boot company executive, a newspaper editor, two former state legislators, and the president of the Oregon Unit of the Wally Byam travel trailer group. To make the event even more spurious, La-

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wanda Bronson is the granddaughter of 1973's official Round-Up Co-Chief. (The other Co-Chief is his brother.)

There are 69 entries in the Junior American Indian Beauty Contest, girls between one-and-a-half and twelve years old. Like the other Indians engaged in other events during the week, they walk through the contest perfunctorily, looking for the white man who gives them each a silver dollar when it's over. The event is held in Roy Raley Park, named for the man who wrote the Happy Canyon script.

The American Indian Beauty Contest, for older "princesses," is held downtown on Main Street. Perhaps because the sham is a little more apparent to 16-year-olds, only eight sign up for the event. Six show up to be judged by another all-white jury before an audience that contains virtually no Indians. This time, in addition to the Oregon Wally Byam man and the boot company executive, the judges include the president of a chain of department stores, a corporate advertising director, Oregon's secretary of state, and the president of the International Wally Byam Club. The girl who wins gets a blanket and a wrist watch and poses for the tourists. Last year her sister won second place in the Junior American Indian Beauty Contest.

The man behind a part of this is a white man, a veterinarian named Russ Whitford. He is one of seventeen Round-Up rodeo directors, and his responsibility is "Indians." He's been with the rodeo for over thirty years and, like some of the other directors, he is bound up almost incestuously and nepotistically with the rodeo as a money-making operation. He explains that white judges with some social standing are necessary for the Indian beauty contests to "give the thing some dignity." He tells me getting the Indians oranized to participate properly in the Pendleton Round-Up is arduous work, "like fielding a good football team." He tells me "these Indians don't like to get in there and judge these contests themselves," and "my whole thing is the Indians should run the whole show themselves." Asked why there were no Indians doing this, or any in a position of responsibility with the rodeo, Dr. Whitford replied that there were two reasons: it requires about $200 out-of-pocket expenses for him to "manage" the Indians every year and he says no Indian has that kind of money; secondly, it takes "a little time to learn how to handle an executive position." "But some of our Indians, some of these young fellows, are coming along pretty good."

Dr. Whitford's primary responsibility is staging the daily Indian Tribal Dance in the rodeo arena. Dancers must abide by a long list of Dr. Whitford's rules that tell Indians what to wear, how to behave (*e.g.*, no gum-chewing) and how to perform 'authentic dances.' His block lettered signature at the bottom has been circled and someone has written "Kill!" next to it.

Gazing out over the Indian Village, Whitford tells me he's proud to set out a few beers for the Indians who help him with this all week long, and that, by and large, "Indians are better behaved than whites in a low income bracket."

* * *

Twenty-year-old, blonde Becky Raymond is Queen of the 1973 Pendleton Round-Up. Her father, Royal, after 25 years with the rodeo, is livestock director. Becky's aunt was a princess on the 1949 Round-Up Court. She herself was a princess in 1972. Her brother and sister are flag bearers with the rodeo. In 1970 she won the Don Potter Award, the highest 4-H horse award given in the state. In state finals she was voted four years running outstanding county 4-H horseman (*sic*). In 1971 she was voted her school's Outstanding Athlete, High School Miss Citizenship and head cheerleader. She was also the senior prom queen and student body secretary. She went to the state track meet two years running in three events and was three years voted to the league all-star team in volleyball. She tells me "the greatest thing that has ever happened to me is being named Queen of the Round-Up." She also plays the piano.

* * *

The rodeo that takes place every afternoon consists of a series of about 20 events. In addition to the six main events for ropers and riders, there are several horse races, a stage coach race, a wild cow milking contest, a wild horse race, clown acts, 20 mule team demonstrations and various flag ceremonies and mounted guard demonstrations. A professional announcer provides a running commentary to it all, announcing rider's times, relaying rodeo anecdotes, encouraging applause and introducing dignitaries. It's the sort of phony, predictable, insincere, cliché-ridden, debasing, almost mindless 'bright patter' that dribbles from the mouths of quiz show moderators on daytime TV. But it's also the keynote address for various illusions being entertained in the grandstands.

Behind the stands, keeping adroitly to themselves, are the cowboys. They rub rosin into their chaps, twist and flex to loosen muscles, and rock back and forth on the ground in their bronc saddles, getting psyched up. They buckle short straps around their ankles to keep their boots on during a bull ride. Tourists stand and watch, photograph, but look away if a cowboy stares at them.

The cowboys talk about Mark Van Husen who had a good ride on a saddle bronc named Fallout the day before but broke his right arm getting off. Four or five who've learned sign language are talking with Martin Haptonstall, a deaf bull rider who's in the finals on a Charolais bull named Geronimo. They are a little irked about the size of the purses (the Round-Up has put up $13,410; the cowboys' entry fees total another $25,100). They are joking about Larry Mahan, on his way to his sixth All-Around Cowboy World Championship, who had a mediocre ride on a saddle bronc named Powder River and got thrown off a bull named Crasher. Out of the finals, Mahan has flown his plane on to Albuquerque for another rodeo. Daryl Kong, a champion saddle bronc rider from Brisbane, Australia, who won here at Pendleton and at Calgary last year and at Cheyenne this year, has also had a few bad rides and left

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by car for an all-night drive to a rodeo in St. George, Utah.

They have names like Merle and Pake and Dewey Lee, Jo Jo, Corkey and Stubb. They've drawn rides on bulls called Tornado, One Punch, and Ice Man, broncs like Quicksand, Wall Street, and Standoff Kid, and barebacks like Moody River, Bo Jangles, Scrap Iron, and Burnt River. There are a lot of local cowboys who won't make the finals and there are cowboys from as far away as Louisiana and Illinois, from little towns like Cut Bank, Montana, Battle Mountain, Nevada, and Crooked Creek, Alberta.

If there is a core, a touchstone, to the rodeo, it is down here under this north grandstand where the horses and bulls bide their time in pens before they go into the chute, and where cowboys hide in the privacy of a moment before a ride. They are trying, like many of the people around them. to hold on to a kind of life that's on the wane, trying to hold onto the freedom David Miller and Dalton Trumbo explored in *Lonely Are the Brave*. Trying to operate on your own. They suffer smug derision in a world that abides the immorality of the embezzler but denounces as atavistic the cowboy who gets drunk and starts a fight. The acts of immorality committed by people wearing cowboy hats are highly visible and so all cowboys have come to be regarded as uneducated, drunken brawlers. It is unfortunate, because a good many of the real cowboys, the ones making it in loneliness and privacy on the back of a bull, represent a sort of gene pool that, doomed to pollution by the Marlboro man and the Winchester man, may become extinct. Without this knot of integrity — like the kingpost in a whaleboat — the Pendleton Round-Up would soon collapse into the common charade of minor-league hustlers, Indian chiefs, Cleveland housewives decked out in $2000 squash blossom necklaces, and the self-patronizing system of cliquish executive direction that nibbles at the fringes of this pageant.

Rodeo, as it happens in Pendleton, is a game played by well-intentioned men who, for whatever reason, seek the dollar of the tourist raised on television reality and let that other reality, the bull rider riding, take care of itself. Plenty of flash from the cowboys and the rodeo stock keeps you from asking awkward questions like: What are we doing here? The tourists, who come with cameras and tape recorders and other devices that gather information but which prevent any sort of real contact, waddle through Pendleton like s m i l i n g Kresge shoppers stoned on consumption.

In a context other than the *Truth or Consequences* atmosphere provided by the announcer ("Relax now, folks, and enjoy a real touch of the great West, as we present the true Americans, our own Northwest Indians in their traditional dances . . .") these tourists could conceivably be the most dangerous people in the world. Someday when, like the San Andreas fault, the shearing of truth and illusion exposes the endless rip-off of gut-bomb carnival food, bleacher seats, drugstore cowboys and plastic Indian jewelry, their rage will surface and maybe even the bullriders sitting down there under the stands won't be able to hang tough. The clowns, perhaps, will be the only ones to survive it.

The clowns are here with their pet skunks and exploding hats, their cars packing 42 kids, filling in the blank space between events and setting the arena announcer up with one-liners. But they are also the ones who bait the bull when a rider falls off and swat the bull's nose and pull his tail while the rider runs for a fence. In polka dot shirts and makeup and baggy pants they play the bull as close as death, close enough to create terror in the eyes of the spectators. Their craft is to play the truth against the illusion for a laugh; but they know where the edge is. □

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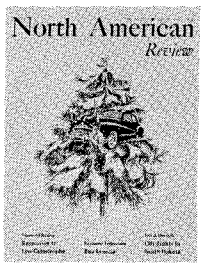

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENCE

Peter Marshall

The British General Election

The British General Election of 1974 was certainly the most indecisive, arguably the most tedious, and probably the most significant of recent years. The electorate was reminded by its outcome of a political situation which had not been encountered for many years and last in 1929: this failure of the parliamentary system to install a government furnished with a working majority in the House of Commons appeared to some observers as little less shocking and alarming than the constitutional issues that they had contemplated, with a certain degree of superiority, being raised across the Atlantic. The Conservative administration had sought a mandate for strong government: Labour had offered a blend of practical competence and ministerial experience. If, through the mechanism of constituency voting, the electorate had been able to deliver a general response, its tone and content was that of a refusal to entrust unqualified authority to either major party. For the first time in 45 years the Members of Parliament could not, for all practical purposes, be considered as representatives of a two party system. Many politicians were obviously disturbed and angered at a change whose consequences are not yet known but which may well prove of major significance.

Under Edward Heath's leadership the Conservative party had against expectations won the General Election of 1970. That result had indicated a national swing away from a Labour government whose main deficiency in the eyes of the electorate may well have amounted to little more than an inevitable decline in popularity after a term in office. A few hours after results began to be declared the defeat of Labour appeared certain as votes moved with a degree of national uniformity towards the Conservatives at the expense of Labour and Liberal representation. In less than four years, and a year before a General Election needed to be held, Edward Heath felt compelled to surrender a reduced, but still working, majority in Parliament in the hope of securing a political endorsement of his economic policies. His appeal to the people was made neither under normal conditions nor in normal circumstances, and a Government which, if the diaries of Cecil King can be believed, entered office determined to bring the Unions to heel, found itself asking, and being denied, unqualified support in its attempts to set limits on wage settlements. In itself this endeavor represented, as commentators were quick to point out, a U-turn in Conservative policy, since Heath had entered office with the failure of the Labour government to sustain a wages policy fresh to hand and determined to follow contrasting approaches to the problems of economic growth and of wage and price levels by restricting the extent and degree of state intervention. Both parties had, therefore, found themselves successively in conflict with the Unions and had been driven, in the case of Labour, to abandon the policies of Mrs. Barbara Castle, and in the case of the Conservatives to appeal to the electorate for a renewal of their mandate.

The political attractiveness to the British electorate of Conservative leaders may be found in their greater variety in comparison with their Labour rivals, where the choice is basically restricted to that of trade union representatives or middle class professionals and intellectuals. The Conservative ranks have been recently composed of a greater number of readily distinguishable types. Edward Heath, the Prime Minister, was a Tory in the manner of Sir Robert Peel, his lower class origins concealed — or acknowledged — in a manner and accent of speech that had surely been acquired at some point in his educational and social ascent. Eschewing emotion, lacking in personal charm, his policy directed the economic objectives of the Government towards the encouragement of sustained growth with a determination and inflexibility unknown since the post-war dominance at the Treasury of Sir Stafford Cripps. Between Heath and his Tory predecessor, Sir Alec Douglas-Home, there appeared little, if anything, in common; the old Etonian aristocrat, whose interest in economics might seem limited to the costs incurred in maintaining a grouse-moor and whose management of foreign affairs appeared to testify both to the decline of the role of the Foreign Secretary and of the international significance of British policy, belonged to an older and perhaps stronger source of leaders. Certainly Sir Alec, however limited his talents, appeared to warm the hearts of Tory supporters; Edward Heath, at best, won their respect and recognition. William Whitelaw, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland until the weeks preceding the election — when it appeared that the I.R.A. was not so

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menacing a threat to the Government as was the National Union of Mineworkers, and he became Secretary of State for Employment — represented a third Tory type: that of leadership by origin, acceptance and personal benevolence. The blend of superiority and a shared humanity is probably, within a British context, the most effective guise that Conservatism can adopt, but Whitelaw had too little time in which to switch his attention from the Irish to the Unions for any growth to occur in his political reputation. This does not exhaust the variety of Tory political types: there was Peter Walker, his fortune acquired before he was forty, representing the self-made but still comparatively young Tories; Robert Carr, the Home Secretary, who on occasion appeared to maintain a liberal position, often in opposition to an open opponent of his and the Prime Minister's views, Enoch Powell. It is difficult to name precursors of Powell in the Conservative ranks, and far from obvious where his links with Tory politics are to be detected — perhaps only in his reverence for the continuity of British political institutions, which must be reconciled with economic views that would not have met the approval of politicians younger than Joseph Chamberlain — but his combination of apparent intellectual power and emotional commitment, put at the disposal of the Biritish nation as an aid to maintaining its traditional identity, was both singular for a politician of the Right, and arresting in its obvious capacity to arouse a popular response. The Conservatives entered into the election campaign with this leadership in some disarray, partly as a consequence of rifts within the party between Right and Left, but more substantially as a result of the problems posed but not resolved by the economic condition and industrial outlook of the country.

The relationship between a Conservative government and the trade unions has varied in degree over the years. To a large majority of active trade unionists it has always been true that a Labour administration is 'their' government and that consequently a Conservative government may be considered as representative of the employers. This has not guaranteed industrial peace under Labour or hostility under the Conservatives, but it has encouraged assumptions that such might prove the case. A sympathetic Tory figure such as Sir Walter Monckton had once proved, and as William Whitelaw had promised to be, might have dulled the edge of industrial antagonisms. Edward Heath, however, has always preferred principles to personalities as a guide to government, a choice which would seem to reinforce his aloof, magisterial style of politics. The economic policy to which he adhered, until the events of last winter finally compelled him to admit defeat, stemmed from his determination to extricate the British economy from its 'Stop-Go' cycles, in which periods of expansion led only to inflationary conditions from which recovery was possible only by governmental moves to damp down demand; these phases could be clearly identified through balance of trade and unemployment figures. Heath was determined to achieve a breakthrough into sustained growth, a success which would be achieved by a resolution to steer the economy, as if he were at the helm of his yacht, through the rough waters of expansion into the luxuriant calm of greater prosperity. The endeavor required strong nerves and the faith that conditions now favored its success: the second requirement was to be met by the entry of Britain into the European Economic Community.

* * *

Whether or not it would prove of benefit to the country to secure admission to the Common Market is a question as yet unresolved in terms either of fact or of sentiment. Support and opposition of the step is to be found in both major parties, though whether these views spring from political, economic, traditional or xenophobic opinions cannot be ascertained with any degree of certainty. Both parties had made unsuccessful bids to join the Market before the Conservatives finally gained the benefit or blame of subscription to the Treaty of Rome. The justification had been apparent for years, for all to see, in the changing pattern of Britain's international trade. The area of growth was not to be found in the traditional regions of supply and demand — the Commonwealth and United States markets — but in Western Europe, and this despite the disadvantages imposed by exclusion from the tariff-free grouping of the Six. Seeking entrance and accepting the provisions of the Treaty of Rome involved the judgment that the resultant gains to British industry would outweigh the losses of cheaper food supplies. Common Market agricultural producers would gain protection from competitive sources which could more effectively meet British consumers' needs but not those of markets for industrial products. As an economic decision, entry to the Common Market was both a logical step and something of a gamble.

The European question could not be restricted to calculations of material gains and losses; it was also a political issue of great moment involving the formal surrender of national sovereignty. Opposition to such a step crossed party lines, linking Enoch Powell with Left-wing Labour members, and extended the debate over another controversial topic by suggestions that the will of the people was not necessarily reflected in a purely parliamentary decision. A House of Commons that had not been elected after a campaign specifically turning on the Common Market issue had declined to put the question before the people either by means of another General Election — though this would have been difficult to arrange in view of the lack of correspondence between parties and attitudes — or by means of a popular referendum, a solution for which no British precedent existed. No doubt Edward Heath had concluded that the proof of the pudding was in the eating: should the expected benefits accrue from Common Market membership, the process by which it had been secured would cease to cause any stir. Whatever the justification of this belief until the summer of 1973, the economic problems which in the second half of that year domi-

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nated the British scene incidentally removed any prospect of the fulfilment of Heath's hopes. Reluctantly and at the last possible moment a confession of failure was elicited.

The cause of disaster was, of course, the energy crisis, which imposed multiple strains upon an already vulnerable economy. Britain's fuel sources were far from secure. Although by the end of the decade there was a reasonable chance that the North Sea and other offshore oil fields would be reducing imports and relieving the adverse balance of trade, Britain for the immediate future was totally dependent upon imported oil. Fuel costs had in recent years dictated a switch from coal to oil, even in the generation of electric power. The hopes which had earlier resided in the development of nuclear stations had not been fulfilled: although the earlier plants had been maintained, the later, more sophisticated reactors had encountered engineering problems which had put completion years behind schedule. This left only coal as Britain's indigenous, if traditional, source of energy. Could an industry which for decades had appeared under sentence of extinction be restored to a position of crucial importance in the British economy?

The question was easy to answer if cost was of no real concern. The post-war Labour Government had nationalized the coal mines to no one's visible regret: between and during the wars the industry had been subject to under-capitalization, poor labour relations, Government intervention — as often harmful as beneficial — and steady decline in demand. The National Coal Board continued to lose public money, though it closed down large numbers of pits, reduced the labour force, and improved methods and conditions of production. Coal mining, by its nature and location, is an isolating industry: the miners' link between coalfields was their Union, their self-regard that of economic and political vanguards of the industrial working class. A number of permanent Union officials have always been open members of the Communist Party; this does not seem to have made much, if any, difference to their popularity with union rank-and-file, who have judged their leaders simply in terms of their stewardship of miners' interests. If relations within the industry were poor — a permanently maintained consequence of the long years of depression between the wars and folk memories of the protracted and disastrous strike of 1926—conflicts on a national scale had not taken place prior to the strike which in 1972 threatened to bring the country to a standstill and which was terminated on the eve of disaster by a settlement that might be construed as a defeat for governmental policy. Within two years the crisis had returned in even fuller measure, since the miners' demands both coincided with the economic and political stands adopted by the oil producers and represented not an implicit but a direct challenge to the anti-inflationary wage increase limits — already regarded by some economists as over-generous — set by the Government. Moreover the miners' case was supported by many as the means by which a bitterly opposed and resented labour policy might be brought to an end.

The ability of the State to set limits upon the activities of the trade unions has not been obvious since 1945. Powers such as those created by the Taft-Hartley legislation or assumed and employed by the Canadian House of Commons in legislating an end to national labour conflicts have formed no part of post-war British government. The decision of the Heath administration to break with this practice by enacting legislation designed to impose rules and regulations upon the Unions did more to evoke hostility and mistrust of a Tory government than any other single step could have ensured. To Union leaders I.R.A. had come to mean not deaths in Northern Ireland but an abridgement of workers' freedom through the detested and, as far as possible, rejected Industrial Relations Act. By the time the miners' pay claim proceeded from an initial offer that was said to provide as large wage increases as Government policy allowed but was nonetheless rejected, to a ban on overtime working that wreaked havoc with output figures, and finally to a total national stoppage, the hostility between Government and Unions appeared open and intense. The Government would not allow the miners to breach its wage policy, even if the cost of resistance was the placing of industry on a three day working week with the result of wrecking the balance of trade figures. With no solution in sight, Edward Heath resolved, or was persuaded, to go to the country and secure a fresh mandate from the electorate.

* * *

Although British campaigns are comparatively brief, that of 1974 seemed, the first and last days excepted, apparently endless. Between the initial statement of programs and the final counting of votes nothing of significance appeared to occur, measured and described though these non-events were by multiple opinion polls and excessive television reportage. The Tories stressed the need for strong government and attempted to arouse fears of Red domination over the Unions. Labour sought to direct attention away from those internal conflicts between Left and Right that had spurred on differences over issues such as the Common Market and further nationalization, in order to stress the competence and experience of their political leadership and an ability to resolve the problems of industry and get Britain back to work. Employment, housing, mortgages, food costs, social services, were the questions now to be emphasized, not those which would demonstrate or open debate on the ideological thrust and objectives of a Labour government. The Conservatives, with the consequences of the short-comings of their economic and labour policies more blatantly evident as polling day approached, were compelled to resort to the argument that the outlook for the nation was so uncertain as to eliminate any notion of entrusting power to others. A political debate conducted at this level was understandably found less than fascinating by the electorate.

A series of barren and short-winded political arguments did not

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serve to distinguish the election from others of recent decades. The difference to be observed was not that of the relative lack of attractiveness of the two major parties but rather that the electorate was no longer willing, despite this fact, to restrict its choice to their alternatives. Previously, by-elections had led to other, chiefly Liberal victories, which had been countered at ensuing General Elections as constituencies returned to their accustomed preferences. Although the Liberals had recently achieved excellent results in a series of by-elections, gaining five seats in quick succession, it was assumed that their support would melt away in the intensity of a national campaign. But as election day grew closer, opinion polls indicated otherwise, allotting at least 20% of the vote to their candidates. The party leader, Jeremy Thorpe, like his predecessor Jo Grimond a decade earlier, was at least as popular a figure as Wilson and Heath, but the willingness of the electorate to translate this feeling into votes for candidates in the constituencies remained to be seen. The Liberal revival, together with extensive revision of constituency boundaries, ensured that the conversion of opinion poll figures into estimates of seats to be gained or lost by the parties would pose an insoluble problem.

This belief was confirmed from the receipt of the earliest results. Whereas in 1970 the trend towards Conservatism was both obvious in extent and national in emphasis, in 1974 no clear shift either towards or against the Government was quickly discernible. It was evident that Edward Heath was not receiving the additional backing he had sought, but it was also noticeable that voters, particularly in strongly Conservative constituencies, were supporting the Liberals rather than Labour, increasing their count some three-fold, but falling short of outright victory while wresting second place from Labour. The Liberal revival was widespread, but not uniform: marked in middle-class English constituencies, it was far from impressive elsewhere. If the growth of the Liberal vote differentiated this from previous elections, the immediately important events were those occurring in renamed and unknown, drearily industrial constituencies in the North of England and the Midlands, as marginal Conservative seats became marginal Labour acquisitions. In the West Midlands, the Black Country area around Birmingham, the swing to Labour was more pronounced, a condition associated by commentators with the refusal of Enoch Powell, a member for Wolverhampton, to participate in an election which he had denounced as useless and unnecessary, and his consequent advice to electors to vote Labour, if only because of its more pronounced opposition to the Common Market.

Liberal advances and Powell's retirement — which none thought permanent, as immediate references to his retreat to Wolverhampton-les-deux-Eglises made clear — were not the only distinguishing features of the Election. Perhaps even more significant were the shifts of electoral allegiance which marked the results in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. In Wales two Plaid Cymru candidates were elected, while in Scotland seven Scottish Nationalists won victories. Although by history and convictions the Welsh conforms much more clearly to the nationalist pattern than does the Scottish party, this quality may hinder rather than help its political progress. The principal difficulty resides in the movement's identification with the maintenance of the Welsh language, a minority tongue in much of Wales. Gaelic does not attempt to fill a comparable role in the cause of Scottish nationalism, which feeds on southern neglect of northern interests, the economic prospects of North Sea oil, and a desire to retain or restore the institutions appropriate to an independent nation. Northern Ireland, the only region of the British Isles with experience, however unhappy, of local autonomy, had been awarded fewer seats at Westminster than its population would warrant as a counterpoise to possession of Stormont. Although the suppression of this Assembly had removed the justification of under-representation no change had occurred during the redistribution of seats. Hitherto the twelve members had been overwhelmingly Ulster Unionist in name and in non-Irish matters clearly Conservative. In the aftermath of the establishment by the Tories of the new, power-sharing, Executive, the Unionists had split for and against their former leader, Brian Faulkner, and the rapid declaration of the election prevented the Faulkner Unionists and the Social Democratic Labour Party and Alliance — their allies at provincial level — from uniting their efforts to win Westminster seats. In consequence, eleven of the twelve seats fell to anti-Executive loyalists, thus depriving the Conservatives of a vital group of votes and completing the division between British and Irish party politics.

It would seem reasonable to argue that the Liberal and nationalist challenge, though in no way coordinated, provides double proof of the growing unwillingness of the electorate to restrict its choice to one of two parties. The Liberals, in particular, were both delighted to secure over six million votes and infuriated that this high point of attractiveness had won them no more than thirteen seats. The Scottish Nationalists were busy declaring that their winning of 22% of the vote had conferred upon them a "mandate". The mathematical and political bases of this claim were not disclosed. It was evident, however, that the presence in the new House of some forty members holding the balance between the two major parties aroused a shocked response from Whips quite unused to such conditions. The inability of the system to provide a solid party majority met with an initial disbelief. The problem posed Edward Heath in his unavailing and awkward attempt to stay in office with Liberal support was matched by Harold Wilson's challenge to impose Labour policies on a non-Labour majority.

It was a situation that one would guess appealed much more to Wilson than to Heath. The Labour leader's particular strength has also proved his general weakness, as skilled management of political crises could seem

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to the less sympathetic to involve shuffling deceits and evasions of issues. The composition of the Government was an instant reminder that Wilson was back in office: the problem of preferring Left or Right, Marketeers or Anti-Marketeers, was met by a system of checks and balances. The one appointment that roused spirits or eyebrows according to conviction was the appointment of Michael Foot as Secretary of State for Employment. Long known as a politician who placed ideological purity above the compromises of power, Foot entered office for the first time at the age of sixty. Given power to end the miners' strike he rapidly achieved this task, though the amount conceded to pay the claim must be accorded greater credit than the presence of Foot on the scene. Britain was extracted from the grip of the three day week, at a cost which has yet to be fully calculated.

The parties' parliamentary tactics soon became evident. The Government intended, by the double necessity of votes and the economy, to give the fight against inflation priority over the passing of Labour's legislative program. The Conservatives recognized that the satisfaction of defeating the Government had to be balanced against the perils of another General Election which might provide Labour with a clear majority. Their opposition was, therefore, generally restrained. The Liberals continued to denounce an electoral process in which over six million votes had provided them with only thirteen seats. They had clearly forgotten the comment of the late Iain MacLeod on the occasion of an earlier Liberal revival, which he had deprecated with the comment, "In politics there is no reward for coming second." Since the Prime Minister can avail himself of the weapon of Dissolution at any time, the date of the next election cannot be predicted with any accuracy; estimates have varied from June 1974 to late in 1975. The Conservatives assume that the longer the election is delayed, the greater the disillusionment with Labour. The Government, on the other hand, hopes that the partial introduction of certain policies will encourage the electorate to provide a clear working majority for their implementation in the later years of the 1970s. The Liberals cannot afford to let a common opposition to Labour reduce them to a small element inevitably overshadowed by the Tories' greater strength. It will, in any case, be surprising if they secure six million votes at the next election, and likely that they may lose some seats.

The Labour party stands to gain or suffer more at the next General Election than the other parties. Returned with a working majority, the Government would possess the political power to reshape British society; defeated, the conflicts between Left– and Right–wing members would be renewed and grow still more bitter. Which prospect at present seems the more likely?

The opening of a new phase in British politics is suggested by the recent addition of a number of terms to its vocabulary: 'neutral budgets', 'renegotiation' and 'social contract' or 'social compact' — the uncertainty of description suggesting certain difficulties of definition — are examples which immediately spring to mind. Changed conditions in a changed situation offer little of substance upon which to establish projections of likely developments. It is possible only to indicate points of possible conflict between the parties.

* * *

During the General Election hardly a reference was made either by way of argument or of assertion to matters of foreign policy. The issues were entirely domestic in nature. The only, partial, exception to this loss of interest was formed by the question of the Common Market, though this could not be considered a direct party question. Since, however, it can be said that membership is favored by a majority of Tories and opposed by a majority of Labour supporters, there are clear pointers to both inter- and intra-party conflicts. The new Foreign Secretary, James Callaghan is also chairman of the Labour party; since he insisted on quoting large sections of his party's election manifesto to the other foreign ministers of the Community, it would seem that the two posts have become somewhat confused in his mind. The Labour aim of 'renegotiation' is clearly impossible if this involves the formal modification of the Treaty of Rome, but feasible and normal practice to the extent that it allows new interpretations of the founding document. It is so far impossible to conclude whether this is understood by the Government but not accepted in the light of anti-European feeling, or whether the nature of the Treaty defeats the understanding of Labour. The indications are that the Government intends to attempt a renegotiation with the purpose of submitting the final situation to a national and unprecedented referendum. Meanwhile, Mr. Callaghan's foreign policy closely resembles standard models of the 1950s, with the world divided into three classifications of descending orders of merit: first, the Commonwealth; second, the United States; third, all others — right wing authoritarian régimes ranked at the very bottom. The relationship between these preferences and the political and economic needs and resources of Britain has not as yet been spelled out. Labour's foreign policy seems unlikely to break new ground, though the European question could inadvertently compel change.

The future and fate of the Labour government will undoubtedly turn on its handling of domestic affairs: with estimates of annual inflation rates now reaching 15%, economic stability obviously becomes more necessary as its attainment grows steadily more unlikely. The Conservative government left the impression of having concentrated its efforts upon restricting wage increases, to the detriment of restraints on profits and prices. The Labour government has chosen to direct its attention to the two less-stressed sources of inflation, and is committed to the abandonment of all formal restraints upon the settlement of wage demands. Hence the existence of the social contract or compact: the Unions have agreed to limit their wage demands on a voluntary basis in return for social and economic

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policies which will indicate the determination of the Government to build the just society. The general intention is no doubt honorable but the enforcement of specific cases may not prove easy. The Trades Union Congress possesses no coercive power over individual unions; what will happen if Government and Union fail to agree on the reasonableness or practicability of a wage demand? The Miners, it was agreed, were different, but it appears that they wish further to accentuate, not reduce, that difference. Will further concessions be extracted, this time from a Labour government? In economic terms it would appear that certain Unions are now not less but more powerful than the State, and it seems ironic that a shrunken coal industry could bring the nation to the point of disaster in 1974 when a much more powerful and vital version could strike for seven months in 1926 and then be reduced to complete acceptance of the employers' terms. At present, the Labour party could not exist without the Unions, but it could not gain power without additional support and votes. The Tories have suffered greatly in recent years through their loss of much middle-class support to the Liberals; Labour needs to beware that its role as the political aspect of Union power does not induce a decline from party to interest group.

As a party, Labour is always in danger of internal dissensions between Right and Left, Trade Unionist and intellectual, working and middle classes. It must set its face resolutely against Welsh and Scottish nationalism since a reduction of Labour representation in these areas would deprive the party of a major advantage over its rivals. Foreign policy questions such as Chile, Portugal, Southern Africa stimulate conflicts; the speed and direction of nationalization and anti-capitalist moves are constant topics of debate. Whether the party would be brought down by such questions remains to be seen. In recent weeks the Opposition has said and done little, suggesting that if policy remains primarily functional and administrative rather than radical and doctrinaire, no serious attempt will be made to defeat the Government for some time.

* * *

The existence of a Government does not guarantee national recovery and it is the necessity of locating an escape from economic difficulties that will make or break any Prime Minister. The Labour party must achieve this end in a capitalist environment which must be reinvigorated as a prelude to its abolition. The Conservative party must maintain the main features of the Welfare State while commending the success of individual enterprise. Of the two approaches, Labour's would seem to present the more difficult task. The shift in emphasis of recent years from improving the facilities of the welfare state to ensuring control of the commanding heights of the economy has brought proposals for a fresh new round of nationalization sufficient to complete State domination of national production. Yet the process would appear to bring no change of any consequence to the social structure of Britain. The signs and behavior of class remain as evident today as they were a quarter of a century ago: where modifications have occurred there will be discovered a balancing extension into formerly spared regions. It would, therefore, be highly unwise to assume that political antagonisms will be softened in the near future by a reduction of social and economic tensions. The reverse process is the more likely. When, in 1941, George Orwell published his study of Socialism and the English Genius, *The Lion and the Unicorn*, he was able to couple astringent criticism with reluctant admiration. England, he concluded,

> resembles a family, a rather stuffy Victorian family, with not many black sheep in it but with all its cupboards bursting with skeletons. It has rich relations who have to be kow-towed to and poor relations who are horribly sat upon, and there is a deep conspiracy of silence about the source of the family income. It is a family in which the young are generally thwarted and most of the power is in the hands of irresponsible uncles and bedridden aunts. Still, it is a family. It has its private language and its common memories, and at the approach of an enemy it closes its ranks. A family with the wrong members in control — that, perhaps, is as near as one can come to describing England in a phrase.

* * *

It is interesting to note the degree to which this description now seems inapplicable, and to consider the possibility that the remaining superficial features of continuity may before long disappear. If present developments do indicate that Britain is at last reaching an end of that period in which, as the country grew poorer, its inhabitants improved their standard of living; if the agreeable pretense that Britain still will be acknowledged — her lack of strength notwithstanding — as a Great Power can no longer be maintained; if the literature and culture of the British Isles can no longer be considered, even by the most dedicated English-language monoglot, as superior to all others; if the drama of politics appears as little more than revivals of former performances — Harold Wilson as the incarnation of the Dunkirk spirit, Enoch Powell shaping to play the Orange Card, Edward Heath revealing the Reds under the Bed — then these aspects of contemporary Britain would suggest an awkward mixture ot decline and stagnation. There should, in short, be a good deal happening in the near future, not all of which is likely to please large sections of the community or improve their relations with other groups. If the family is about to attend a wake, its disputes will be more certainly present than its tears. □

DUKE ELLINGTON

1899-1974

"So now it is vain for the singer
to burst into clamor
With the great black piano
appassionato . . . ."

—D. H. Lawrence

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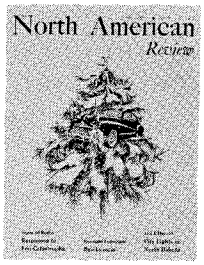

Kenneth Lash

Intelligence and Its Uses

Nerzhin, a character in Solzhenitsyn's *The First Circle*, says ". . . there's a lot of intelligence in the world, but not much that's any good." I marked the sentence, with one of those felt marking pens, yellow. Then I felt uncomfortable. Why am I marking up this book as if I were still a school boy? But it's memorable, I said to myself. And what is this memorable sentence saying, I asked? — except that there's not much of anything worth remembering. Immediately I found myself involved in an argument with me. That's what happens when you start reading Russian novelists. But it *is* silly, I thought, looking at part of my thirty years of books lined up along the walls of the room, all marked inside, all those great thoughts marked and waiting. Waiting for what? Would I visit them again? Would I take them out, withdraw them, and could I, any more, spend them? Could I, except on schoolboy examinations, *ever* spend them? No, but presumably I could save them. A Silas Marner of the mind. I went along, reading and arguing. Either those thoughts get into you as instantly and deeply as sun rays, I said, or you never have them except as pieces of paper belonging to someone else. Fine, I said, I agree, that's it, argument ended.

A few pages later, Lev Rubin quotes *Faust:*

"What we need we do not know,
And what we know we do not need."

I underlined it.

* * *

Syllogism Found in a Bottle:

a) The hardest thing to do is to forgive others . . . which begins by forgiving oneself . . . or being forgiven.

b) And if there's no one around big enough to dispense forgiveness . . . and if I can't do it myself . . .

c) Then you're doomed.

* * *

I have been having an awful time trying to understand the implication of those political polls that show consistently 1) that a majority of the American people polled feel that Nixon *is* guilty of wrongdoing, 2) that the President of the United States should *not* be guilty of wrongdoing, 3) that Nixon should not resign or be impeached. The obvious conclusion is that a majority of us don't feel that wrongdoing is very wrong. Too obvious. It may be accurate, but it seems to stop short. It's too logical, and as these polls show, this matter goes beyond logic.

In a recent letter to the editor of a newspaper, a man wrote, "If Nixon is impeached, the whole U.S. suffers. All of us who voted for him in the last election will be hurt. Our judgement will be challenged. Our belief in man will be questioned . . . ." I have a feeling that the answer I'm looking for is somewhere in those words.

They brought to mind the disinclination of the American man to question his judgement of the automobile he chose to buy. They brought to mind fistfights in bars over who was the best pitcher in the American League. They brought to mind the American love of euphemism, and the notion that a majority is not likely to be mistaken, if in fact there is any such thing as a mistake "Made in America." We are a great country, and if only other men will be like us they too will be great; and if Nixon is like us, then boys will be boys.

Do you see it? Is it in there somewhere? Help me find it. I'll give you an apple.

* * *

Notes from the Socio-Sexual Scene:

CONFERENCE ON RAPE SET

> A mayor's citizen's conference, designed to give Des Moines-area citizens an opportunity to discuss the problem of rape and to make recommendations to correct and improve conditions regarding all crimes, will open Monday.
>
> (Des Moines *Register*, May 3, 1974.)

Well, improving conditions is what America's all about.

* * *

Might as well go on thinking about inflation, it's on everybody's mind, farther and deeper than Watergate. It's neither local nor apt to be temporary. A picture of a loaf of raisin bread currently selling in a grocery for 83¢ is change made visible; the news of people old and young burning electricity bills, rallying against utility rate hikes, oil companies and prices, and looking for buyers for their campers, boats, second homes, etc., is change made palpable.

The Board of Regents and Legislature of my state recently authorized a 7.5% increase in university academic salaries. This wasn't stingy. But inflation is running at 10-12%. Last year I was lagging; now I'm falling behind. I am not of course alone. Dreams of affluence are giving

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way to ploys for standing still. Plots for survival next?

Meanwhile, recently in New York City, subway-toilet window washers signed a union contract giving them an annual base pay of $13,000 plus overtime. More than half the teachers at my university make less. I wish that were the important comparison, the essence of the contemporary picture, but it isn't. Topsy-turvy is not in itself important; but what it indicates, what it predicts, is. Undifferentiated inflation is a blank; in its differentiation lies the outline of its emerging form.

It is being increasingly pointed out that in all major civilizations up to this time economic integration preceded and led to political integration and organization. And contrariwise, economic disintegration led to political disorganization—revolution, invasion, fall. To quote from *Time* (April 8, 1974) "Prolonged inflation represents a failure, and that failure breeds edginess and mistrust. In time it becomes impossible for leaders to succeed because voters demand that government deal with inflation. Yet so various and insistent are the people's other special demands for higher government spending that inflation continues . . . . The process [of political upheaval] begins by setting labor directly against government. Police, firemen, sanitation workers, and other public service employees, battered by inflation, strike for higher wages and benefits. Services to the general public grow worse, and the infection spreads. The ideal of public service erodes—children watch their teachers walk picket lines. The government becomes an adversary. To yield to labor demands heats up the inflation further; to resist spreads further chaos."

And this, again, is only the local scene. But this inflation is international, already being compared to a medieval plague sweeping the world. One can assume that the fifteenth century had its medieval malaprops. Now we have a Canadian economist named Carl Beigie, who says, "What is happening is that the fondue pot of the world is being attacked by people with bigger sticks." (Cheesit! the Crops!) Nonetheless it is daily becoming clearer to more and more people that neither they, their city, their state, their nation, nor now their world can afford major inflation indefinitely prolonged. The problem is that governments—whether democratic, right wing, left wing, or no wing—cannot afford deflation (depression). The people may not overcome, but they may well overthrow. The final and terrible catch is that it would probably do no good whatsoever. The problem is not essentially political, and therefore not solvable solely by political means. It is the world itself that cannot afford inflation. It is the actual physical

body of the world that cannot afford affluence. Not to this many of us. That message seems final.

Where politics may intervene not to solve but to conserve, can only be on an international rather than national level. As Arnold Toynbee points out, the economic unit was once a farm, a village, a county, a city, a state, and finally a nation state. Now the economic unit is the entire world in which the nations occupy positions more analogous to that of what we in this country may think of as separate states than of self-contained entities. Only a supranational political organization can conserve and properly distribute what remains and what is yet to be produced of the world's goods. Short of that, it's a dog fight. With missiles for teeth.

On the level of self-interest, the dog fight has already begun. Everybody organizing into groups, fighting for clout. But clout, unlike money, is not inflatable. Power is not infinitely divisible. It centers or it compartmentalizes, but it cannot do both simultaneously. The United States is a major experiment in the decentralization of authority. But now the people are saying that their individual coin is too small, that it won't buy the power they need. That they must form corporations of power. And it may be that these corporations, like the great multi-national businesses of the contemporary world, may come to cross national lines. Not in the way Marx foresaw—not for the sake of community but for the sake of self. The great subterranean force of inflation rising in the current world has less to do with goods and even with numbers than it does with the dizzying rise of personal expectations on the part of the individual, the inflation of the estimation of self. And this particular inflation has nothing excessive about it at all. Indeed, it comes after a long and often terrible history of the depression of most individuals in the evolution of man. What an awful irony, that at this moment when they see physical and psychological liberation within reach, it is in process of becoming a mirage.

* * *

Spring Poem

Grackle.
  Grackle Grackle.
Grackle
  Grackle
    Grackle.
Grackle.

Gracklesalt.
Grackleguard.
Grackle-Off.
Grackle-Begone.
Grackletrap.
Preparation G.

Grackle.
  Grackle Grackle . . . □

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Introduction

What follows is the result of work done in the Ecophilosophy Group of Samarbeidsgruppene for Natur- og Miljøvern [(snm)[1]], "The Co-working Groups for Nature- and Environment Protection" — a circle of groups working in concert, dealing with the whole range of environmental problems, and which have spread all over Norway during the last four years. In our work with ecophilosophy we have tried to maintain an effective balance between theoretical and practical work: The ecophilosophy group has regularly made visits to villages and farm communities far from the administrative centers and engaged itself in their local problems, it has visited large factories, talked to the workers on the night shift, etc. The group has been composed of people with differing backgrounds, not all of them with any connection to higher teaching institutions. Most of the members have also been active in one or more of the other more practically oriented groups of (snm). To philosophize with clear and direct relevance to political analysis and practical politics — to formulate an ecophilosophy incorporating an ecopolitics — has always been a main goal.

Out of the many topics and aspects that characterize the ecophilosophy of (snm), I must here confine myself to a few. (We have, for example, related ecological thinking to classical European and Oriental philosophy, but that work will not be treated here.) I will first give a brief sketch of our definition and analysis of Industrial Growth Society (IGS), and later mention some characteristics of its counterpart, Life Necessities Society (LNS). This aspect of the ecophilosophy will be stressed because it has the most direct relevance to political action.

The (snm) group has limited the use of the word "ecophilosophy" to philosophy directly and decisively incorporating concepts and hypotheses characteristic of modern scientific ecology (synecology), which to a significant extent constitutes thought forms only embryonic or not even developed in earlier philosophy. Here I have in mind primarily cybernetic thinking in systems ecology, which may be viewed as one starting point for a radical reorientation of our Western scientific tradition — away from its extreme concentration on splitting the world up into discrete objects for specialists' analysis. Oriental philosophy, in contrast to European, also views the world and man as a continuous whole, but lacks the sharpness of concepts relating whole systems and interactions within systems to empirical experiences that modern ecology and systems theory have introduced. This indebtedness of ours to systems ecology will be most apparent in the latter part of this article.

The expression "Industrial Growth Society" has been chosen because we intend to describe a society that has the output of industrial products as its main functional basis, contrasting this with "Life Necessities Society", a society having its basis in the production of life necessities (such as food, shelter, clothing, roads to serve a stability-securing exchange and distribution of food and materials, etc.).

1 The abbreviated form, "(snm)", is purposely written with lowercase letters and parentheses, to remind ourselves that the organization is never to become a goal in itself.

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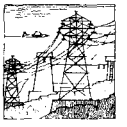
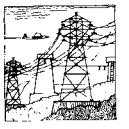
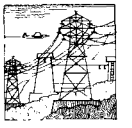
Ecophilosophy and Ecopolitics: Thinking and Acting in Response to the Threats of Ecocatastrophe

by Sigmund Kvaløy

Human ecology: focal point of the ecocrisis

In contrast to most people, who refer when talking about the ecocrisis to pollution and depletion of resources, we have felt that its most serious aspects are those belonging to the fields of *human* ecology[2] and socio-political enquiry. Closely tied to the destruction and disruption of our natural environment is the very rapid change and disruption occurring within the industrial societies. The industrial-growth system, which is common to both Western and Eastern Europe, as well as to North America and Japan, is not only tapping the resources and breaking down the ecosystems of these areas and of the developing countries, but it is building up *social instability* at an accelerating pace. Simultaneously, it is transforming people's way of living so as to make them even more *dependent* upon a continuous ecocrisis. A parallel "adjustment" — at least as disruptive — is inflicted upon the societies and culture of the developing countries, not only through neo-imperialism, but in most cases also through so-called "development aid": projects requiring societies miraculously to thrive after having had their cultural roots severed.

The built-in dynamics and the industrial-economic strength of our "Western" societies seem to mean that we are locked in on a course that entails a total qualitative change in the global society, one which is reversible only after a period of complete loss of control.

If we go on spending most of our time using traditional concepts and discussing traditional political problems (we are not alone in feeling that, for instance, the nomenclature "socialist" and "capitalist" — pertaining to the ideological or political divisions of the Northern Hemisphere — is misleading today), we may bypass the most deep-seated problems of our near future. We might even say that, if the representatives of our countries at the ongoing top-level peace conferences are successful in reaching unanimous conclusions and recommendations within the traditional conflict areas (common law, recognition of borders, an all-European security system, etc.) — and if our engineers and scientists make great progress in pollution control and energy-saving techniques — we might create false feelings in our countries that the future looks brighter and thereby retard a widespread awakening to the steadily deepening systems shift that is going on. The result would be to allow the real crisis of our day — *IGS's disastrous simplification of ecological and social complexity* — to gain momentum towards total irreversibility: a final uprooting of so many evolutionary and cultural threads that any fresh build-up of a kind useful to mankind can occur only after centuries, if ever.

The required new kind of social and political analysis demands great care, in spite of the needed haste. Defensible, specific recommendations for political action cannot be given if not based upon a consciousness so wide in scope and clear in practical implication that it "auto-

2 The term is here used to denote the study of individual humans and human society as integrated parts of the greater ecosystem, and in such a way that the conceptual apparatus of ecology (synecology) is adapted to the description of equilibrium relationships in human society. The concept is wider than that used by anthropologists and sociologists. The ecological work of botanists and zoologists I call *bioecology*.

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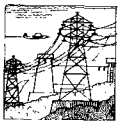
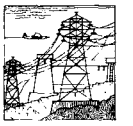
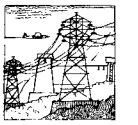
matically" checks all ideas tending to function merely as "security valves" on IGS — only offsetting or retarding *real* solutions.[3] The (snm) group's intention is to contribute towards an analysis of IGS which has such checks built in. We have, of course, made only a slight beginning in the coverage of such a program. To get a scheme of this scope well under way will have to be the task of many groups, working from many different starting points in different countries and cultures.[4] It is now extremely urgent that such groups build up a permanent contact network, preferably independent of official channels and old institutional arrangements.

Industrial Growth Society

We have stressed four features of IGS:

1) It is a society that has its basis in a steady growth in output of *industrial products*, and where the question of whether these products are *life necessities* is *not* treated as an important question. In IGS, what were once *means* have taken the place of central social *goals*. Because this has created built-in difficulties of moral justification, such questions tend to be treated as irrelevant by the decision-makers when production-priorities are decided.

2) The growth in industrial production is propelled through the mechanism of *individual competition*, whether between persons, industrial firms, or industrial states. Not to compete — individually, or in individual units — means not to survive, because of pressure of the same kind on all sides. Loyalty or collective utility are forces of no significant practical import. The spirit of individual competition is infused into the society's members in all walks of life, throughout work and leisure, from economics to sports and art.[5]

3) IGS's most important industrial resource and means to competitive survival is *applied science*. This — coupled with the pressures of competition — means that the *number of* and *variation in* ways of utilizing nature and humans to further industrial growth interests is increasing exponentially; the "front of attack" upon the total ecosystem (including the social system) is always widening with increasing speed, and the sum total and nature of this attack becomes increasingly more difficult to grasp.

It is also important to note that the stiffening competition to be first on the market with new products demands of an increasing number of scientists and engineers that they become narrow-sighted super-specialists. Otherwise they can never hope to outdo the other super-specialists within their special field. These are people who are systematically trained to *lose* that overview which solutions to a systems crisis require.

4) IGS's characteristic tool for social coordination, for repairing social imbalance or disruption, and for taking into account social and individual values is *standardization* and *quantification* (what has been called "social engineering"). Close-knit and complex social units, established through slow adjustment over the ages to specific and varying local requirements, are cut up into pieces, and the pieces refitted into a simplified, standardized, and quantifiable pattern suitable for centralized, bit-unit switchboard control.

This phenomenon — quantification as the general tool of social problem-solving and steering — has leveled the ground for the recent development of control and manipulation through the use of computers, electronics in general, and communication via electrical networks. Seen as a whole, this constitutes a gigantic stride towards shaping man into an accessory to machinery, cutting him off from self-control and from the mastery of his destiny in the global environment.

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[3] The standard example here is pollution technique that allows the drain on resources to increase. A less obvious example is that of wilderness parks functioning as part-time breathing spaces, enabling big-city dwellers to endure the day-to-day stress at home longer before they revolt. In Europe, the EEC is such a security valve of gigantic proportions. We even see ecologists being attached to various EEC agencies, illustrating the prospect that these new experts — listened to with hope because of their proclaimed insight into ecocrisis — may become the most dangerous of all "establishment protectors". These people are indeed very useful to IGS, because they are able to furnish additional data for quantification and central programming. (See also p. 21 and footnote 9!)

[4] In order to do fruitful work, I think it is necessary that such groups be consciously engaged in political struggles to protect ecosystems, human environments or human groups, cultural minorities, etc., since this means confrontation with the control bodies of IGS, and IGS reveals itself best when it is fighting off attacks. This also gives the groups a common denominator.

[5] The predominant kind of competition is not the struggle to be best as a positive force (although this is the kind held up as a norm in our homes and schools), but the negative kind: competition as a weapon of defense against attacks from other individuals, other firms, etc. — something each one is *forced into using* to keep abreast of the threat that things and positions may be *taken away from us*. We might call this structural feature of IGS "defensive competition".

One of the obstacles we meet when, for instance, we attack an industrial company for hurting the environment, is the counterattack referring to the loss of competitive ability resulting from spending on pollution removal, and that this is a threat to the company's workers. This may be responsible talk by the company's leaders, but it shows how they and the company are caught up in the evil circle of defensive competition.

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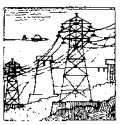
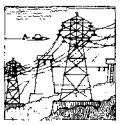
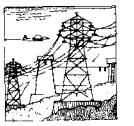

A structure functioning by accelerating its own destruction

We think these four features catch some of the most central aspects of the present-day societies of North America, Europe West and East, Japan, Australia, and New Zealand,[6] and that recognizing them is essential to an understanding of the difficulties inherent in the political project of reversing the ecocrisis

By stressing these features, and by seeing how they interlock, three points spring into focus:

i) IGS is a society that is building up its own imbalance on all levels — ecologically, socially, economically, mentally — and is doing this at an accelerating pace.

ii) The various signs of this imbalance — stress, violence, lack of intrasocial loyalty, etc. — are constantly and necessarily misinterpreted by the society's control organs: All problems are primarily understood as being of a technical or economic nature and the solutions are devised to fit that picture; the "solutions" themselves become factors that strengthen the crisis.

iii) Social bonds are torn apart, meaningless ways of life proliferate, and the unrest and dissatisfaction thus created are compensated for through the "Disneyland effect" (sometimes called "the Bingo effect") — that is, through cultural diversions having no relation to man's everyday struggle for security, personal inner growth, the mastery of complex survival problems, etc.[7] The members of the society meet each other and their environment through the "MM-barrier" — the artificial wall of "machinery and media" (*diverting* any "message" — to disagree, in passing, with McLuhan!). Direct contacts and the sharing of challenges are missing.

The result of this is that people more and more live in a *fake* world, and that they gradually and unnoticeably *lose the ability* to master their own situation and to take part in a conscious shaping of their society. In other words, we reach a state of affairs where people *have* to be governed from the outside and above (*asystemic control* is replacing *systemic*, to use the expressions of *The Ecologist's* editor, Edward Goldsmith): Society becomes "addicted to" a continuation on the same course.

Expressed alternatively: The human basis for a life of meaningful growth, for a living democracy, and — related to the former — for the retrieval of ecological balance, is undermined in a steady and systematic manner. More and more far-reaching decisions are left to "thinking machines" which think no wider and further than the short-sighted experts who made them, and to the owners and administrators of industrial-growth capital who are blinded by *their* own positions.

What I am describing is a society that *lives* by *accelerating* its own ecological and social crisis: Even a shift from an exponential to a linear industrial expansion rate would bring on a serious upheaval in society. A return to ecological equilibrium — steady state — would mean a basic breakdown of our present society and culture.

Others who have studied the problems facing our Euro-American societies have come up with similar analyses (*e.g.*, writers like Theodore Roszak and Edward Goldsmith), if not with the same pessimistic conclusion or the same political stance. The most important point here is that these analyses logically point in the direction of an extremely dangerous situation, and of a timetable for solutions that is tight indeed. They also indicate that traditional ways of defining political problems are completely outdated.

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6 We could also add several Third World areas, especially in reference to the economic and social structures of some big city districts — like, for instance, Sao Paulo, Brazil. These function economically, socially, politically, and culturally as bridge-heads of IGS imperialism.

7 There is another important diversional effect that really needs a lengthier exposition, but must at least be mentioned here, if only in passing: *War* and the threat of and preparation for war seem, up to now, to have had an important function in keeping an IGS nation together when its inner social structure is far gone towards dissolution. The best example of recent years is the USA in relation to Indo-China — *cf.* President Nixon's finger pointing to the East and the great effort needed there whenever internal pressures are mounting at home. (The point is well stated in L.C. Lewin: *Report from Iron Mountain on the Possibility and Desirability of Peace*, New York 1967.) Still another example may be the U.S. military "alert" during the 1973 Middle East crisis.

What now seems to be happening is that an extra effort is being put into reducing warring activity and war production on behalf of the IGS powers because of the costs involved, in the face of the present crisis in materials and energy. The effect of diverting the citizens' attention from troubles at home and giving society a semblance of unity will be seriously reduced if real peace "breaks out"; we are, however, probably now seeing a transition from the "war diversion" to the "ecocrisis diversion" — *i.e.*, from the utilization of one outside threat to another as a means of persuading people to "stick it out a little longer". Right now it is easier to persuade IGS citizens that pollution and shortages in food, materials, and energy are threats requiring concerted action and great sacrifice than to make continued reference to the threat of armed aggression. The ecocrisis may then go on expanding without too much popular protest against a deteriorating existence and new levels in rules and regulations — just as the people endured a worsening of their lot to save the nation during past wars. Through such intervention, the factual picture of a society that has lost its systemic nature may be hidden for some additional period.

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In Norway, Dr. Peter W. Zapffe, Professor Arne Naess, and Assistant Professor Hjalmar Hegge, have pioneered work in this direction. They are all (snm) members, but have not directly taken part in the work within the Ecophilosophy Group. Zapffe worked out his biosophy as early as 1940. Naess, who has been head of the Institute of Philosophy at the University of Oslo for 25 years, has named his recent venture ecosophy.

There are interesting differences between Zapffe and Naess, despite their shared commitment to the value of intense communion with their country's nature of subarctic mountains and fiords — the specific influence having left its strong mark on nearly all literary and artistic talent in Norway. Zapffe's basically tragic view of the fate of the human species made it natural for him to underline the entropy law (saying that all energetic and material potentialities in the universe are inexorably running down) to show how easily man's effort to create specifically human order ends in increased disorder and destruction. Because of this and a conceptual structure based on his interest in early theoretical "humanist" ecology, Zapffe's 1940-60 work reads surprisingly modern today. His intensity and poetic inventiveness have inspired many Norwegian environmentalists to seek ethical and philosophic foundations for their positions.

While Zapffe stresses the relationships of conflict as basic in man's meeting with nature and his fellow being, Naess, however, is basically optimistic in his writings, philosophically finding his closest kinship in the Oriental and Spinozistic views of the world as at the core harmonious, stressing that man and nature are one, and opposing strongly the traditional anthropocentric view of European culture. To Naess, the entropy law could not achieve the basic position it has in Zapffe's philosophy, because of his sceptical position in epistemology and his corresponding lack of interest in ontology (Naess does not commit himself to the positive assertion "man and nature are in fact one" — but neither can the opposite be asserted, and this is his chosen perspective). In practical ethics, Naess has sought an association with the work of Gandhi. This part of his work has been very influential among Norwegian environmental activists. (Cf. Naess's "The Place of Joy in a World of Fact" in the Summer 1973 NAR.

One might perhaps say that while neither Zapffe nor Naess has been accepted wholly (they could not both be at the same time in the same person), they have been two of the elements contributing to making Norwegian ecophilosophy and ecopolitics into something that probably is not easily fitted into categories of contemporary thought originating elsewhere on these matters. Other contributing elements to this specifically Norwegian mixture are such items as: Norwegian historical background, conditions for living posed by nature, climate and landscape (division into tiny communities with difficult communication always posing problems to a central administration, expanses of arable land so small and scattered that a strong feudalism never came into being) — all the elements that also go to explain the Norwegian "No" to joining the European Common Market, a matter that is, of course, closely related to the contemporary problems of man and environment. The only other nation where I personally have found widespread thinking on the subject of man, society, and nature quite close to the Norwegian, is Iceland — which should be a surprise to no one, keeping in mind the similarities in background and present situation of the two nations.

'Complexity' versus 'complication'

The planners of our present-day society very often speak about the necessity of creating human environments that are "colorful", "rich in variety", "manifold", "complex" — and often refer to findings and theories in psychology, sociology, and ecology when doing so. At the same time, they talk about modern big cities as representing an *increase* in diversity and complexity over the rural or small town environments they have replaced. We think that in most cases the planners are wrong, or at least that talk about the "complexity of modern living" is misleading. Furthermore, we feel that such pronouncements may even serve as an especially refined way of weaving a curtain of artificial beads and glitter *hiding* from the public what the planners are really contributing to — a steadily increasing *simplification and disruption* of ecological and social complexity. Through *non*-ecological reasoning, modern city planners and experts of various categories in the service of industrialism give their decisions an air of unquestionable authority by referring to ecology — the science that "everybody knows" is designed to give the answers to the most pressing dangers facing mankind today.

In an attempt to clear our thoughts in this area, we have split up the old notion of complexity into two concepts: *'complexity'* for ecological complexity and *'complication'* for that kind of multifactored set of entities and relationships that can be expressed through *quantification*. A person who is busy solving a routine problem in cal-

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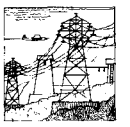
culation, finding a statistical expression for proportions of this or that within a nation's economy, or operating some piece of machinery in a modern factory, may find the task difficult and demanding (the term "complication" usually has an air associating it with stressful activity). He is, however, all the time operating on the *same qualitative level* — it is always a question of putting the same kind of quantities together into different patterns according to a few (but very ingenious and productive!) standard rules and definitions that he has been taught. What he confronts is *complication*, not *complexity*.

Ecological complexity — in the wide sense needed to understand intellectually and grasp intuitively the workings of nature and human society — operates on *many qualitative levels, besides* the level of complication. Complication was introduced into the world by the human mind, and refers to the special cluster of difficulties and, finally, impossibilities inherent in the attempt to express complexity through quantification. Of course, looking at the world as patterns of measurable and comparable quantities has proved a useful tool for man in the attempt to master his environment; it is even useful and necessary for the future task of recreating complexity in the world — for the protection of a maximum of possibilities for continued complex growth and evolution.

What is happening today, however, is that this one level of theorizing and organizing which has given man his industrial might — the level of quantities — pushes out of serious consideration all human capacities of other levels: intuition, sensitivity, love, direct integration of body and mind in rhythmic movement with nature and fellow beings, aesthetic judgement as a force in practical matters, a person's or group's attachment to a specific home environment, the inner strength and self-reliance gained through such attachment, etc.[8] Nature and its child — the human being — are continuously working on such levels, in areas of function and relationships that do not yield to ready-made, measurable entities. Neither the ecosystem nor the human being can do without them on this side of disaster. One of the obvious examples from human society is the relationship of love that binds parents and children together: A quantitative treatment of this relation would only lead to pseudo-descriptions — expressions corresponding to no real-world phenomena — but without this relationship in fresh bloom human society could not survive.

The vast human faculty of intuition — which operates and guides our myriad minor and major decisions and movements every minute of the day — is likewise beyond quantification. Yet our "social engineers" are busy refining methods of understanding and control that are unsuited to the consequential consideration of any part of this faculty.

Aiding this development is the almost systematic confusion of complexity with complication. Even many leading bio-ecologists are propagating this confusion, forgetting their scientific caution as soon as they lift their eyes from grass and beetles and start talking about their own closest connecting link with nature, the *human* society[9].



Complexity, complication and the political power structure

To a steadily increasing degree, the inhabitants of the world of Western civilization are big-city dwellers, and modern cities are in great measure structures and functional units erected through quantitative thinking and freighted with complication. In order to keep them running, their inhabitants must themselves be treated as quantities all on the same qualitative level; otherwise the centrally placed specialist managers would lose track of what was happening. One of the important aspects of the modern Western city structure is that its basic driving and shaping force is a techno-capitalist economy, which cannot function except through large-scale, "rational", quantitative treatment of its subject matter.

In order to reach the highest level of the movers and managers in this physical and social structure, and to be

8 To order these other qualitative levels into specific, well-defined categories would mean the beginning of a treatment of them on the level of complication. Neither can there be stated a specific limit to the number of qualities or qualitative levels appropriate to a true description of nature. According to the "complexity view" of the world, qualities constitute a continuum in physical and mental space and time. This does not mean, however, that the world appears undifferentiated; rather the opposite, for with this view as a basis we are better able to see the quantitative approach as a grossly misleading *standardization* of nature and man. Nicholas Georgescu-Roegen has an illuminating discussion of the logical trouble confronting those who attempt to categorize qualities in his *The Entropy Law and the Economic Process*, a book that is a rich treasure-chest for all those environmentalists who are frustrated at beating in vain on the fortress walls of standard economic theory.)

9 With big money grants at their backs, such "techno-ecologists" are today busy trying to quantify new — so far unheard of — areas of nature and social systems. Ecological methods have seeped into many a "future research" project. The greater part of such projects are more than anything else symptoms of the IGS view of world and values. Illustrative are, *e.g.*, the work of The Hudson Institute, The Pittsburgh Values Project (IBM), and — as it seems to shape up — the recently launched East-West cooperative project in Vienna: *The International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis.*

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able to stay there, a person must have learned through gradual training and lucky circumstances to function in keeping with the four features of IGS introduced on page 18. The luck is, of course, to be born with the right "talents" — among them the biological basis for a strong ability to withstand psychic stress.

The point I want to emphasize, however, is that in order to be able to ascend to the managerial summit with sufficient energy to spare, one must have led a *complex* life: Through years of upbringing, one must have come out well in the individual competitions he has been engaged in within different fields, so that in general it has not been necessary for him to yield to molds of complication forced upon him from the outside. He has been able to handle and govern the world and people around him through the tool of quantification, because *he himself* has been able to expand by means of intuition, sensitivity, and feeling, — in short, by building up his own inner complexity ("ego-complexity") through a gradually developed mastery of complex environmental and social challenges[10]. As a top manager, this is still his inner energy store, that which is giving him strength, and because he is now in a position to utilize this store to plot the course of society and program other individuals below, he is still able to expand his ego-complexity. Most people, however, are fighting it out at the bottom floor of the socio-political pyramid; they are there because they lost in the race, and their day is one of complication.

Because man is inherently a complex being born of a complex environment, and because it is this complex relationship and its fruit of latent creative expansion that ensures stability in the interplay between man and nature and man and his fellow beings, the enforced complication of the modern environment results in widespread mental and societal disease.[11]

Work - never leisure - is the key element of social cohesion

A human being's ego-complexity and a human group's collective complexity is always mainly built up during the time spent in *work* — *i.e.*, through activity aiming at the mastery of the everyday problems of securing a life where the basic needs and functions can be fulfilled.

This is one reason why we have chosen the term "Life Necessities Society". We are in strong disagreement with those writers — great in number — who think that the future hope for man's inner growth and liberation lies to a significant extent in a "leisure society", a society where machines and computers do the work and leave man free to develop all his positive abilities.[12]

An individual and social "meaningful life" will never result from a predominance of leisure and play. Even children's play presupposes a "serious life" of non-play — a life ordered by a continuous building-up of the ability to survive with security, "come what may". (Recommended reading: Erik Eriksson's *Childhood and Society*!) I must stress, however, that this "building-up" must not be limited to the narrow end of naked physical survival. When speaking of "a life in security" in the ecological sense, I have in mind the effective protection of complexity — *i.e.*, a life with "energy to spare", retaining the potentiality of creative activity (not to be confused with "*care-free play*"!). With this clearly in mind, it is still work (*i.e.*, the accumulation of survival security in spite of entropy) that is the one common meaningful backbone of society in any age.

Because of this distinction, the (snm) group has replaced the expression "survival strength" with "life strength" when speaking about the goal of the environmentalist movement. Securing life strength is, in the long run, the only way to secure survival strength — an idea that seems not to have occurred to the majority of modern social planners. What we find instead, is a striving for survival strength alone, the economic-political system being accepted as a given, fixed entity; the planner's job is to *repair* it when and where its mass of material and energetic activity is threatened with stagnation or decrease.

The focal point of this argument is the *mastery* of the problems related to life strength, the development — in

10 He knows *intuitively* that his main outward tool and means for keeping economic and political power is complication; therefore he refrains from complex relationships with the people he controls. To them, therefore, he may appear as one lacking in inner complexity — which may indeed be the case for the managers *below* him on the power ladder.

11 "Disease" may here be defined as "uncontrolled physical and mental reactions to blocked possibilities of gaining or keeping equilibrium". For further study of disease-concepts of this ("ecological") kind, I recommend Hans Selye (perhaps the most prominent pioneer of modern stress theory) and René Dubos.

12 I have the impression that, for instance, Herbert Marcuse (See his contribution in *The Dialectics of Liberation!*) tends in this direction. If this is true, I think it represents a flaw in the logic of his model of industrial society, — a flaw that may derive from Marx (who seems to come near to contradicting himself on this point in the *Outline of the Critique of Political Economy*, *vide* pp. 500-600). The opinion that post-capitalist automation may help man's liberation might be seen as an expression of Marx's typically "Judeo-Christian" view of History as a uni-directional (though dialectic) development, tending towards a final (communist) stage where man has reached fulfillment through a complete mastery of Nature.

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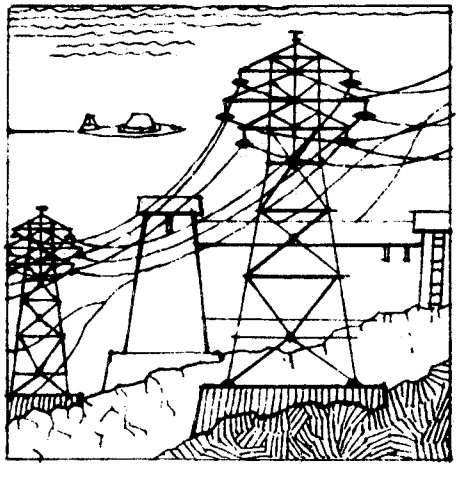
The two mentioned types of society are, in the more practical, political part of (snm)'s work, sometimes symbolized by the pylon (IGS) and the famous Norwegian waterfall of Mardøla (LNS). (Reproduced on this page.) The two symbols refer to the radical contrast between the two societies in their typical ways of utilizing the return of water to the sea in that great central cycle in nature: IGS tries to transform all mountainous areas and riversheds into gigantic cisterns for the production of industrial energy, while the defenders of LNS stress the life-giving energy-cycle that the rivers are part of before industrialization, pointing to the fact that all land-based living beings stand as myriad tiny, thirsty mouths across the paths of the water on its way back, receiving it and transforming it into internal fluid environments resembling sea water — an evolutionary parallel to their original external environment. (This picture is used very vividly by Ian McHarg in his book Design with Nature*).*

To LNS the ocean is the great mother, and the rivers are her lifegiving milk glands that may be suckled by the children she has given birth to and who are now living away from her.

The hydroelectric utilization of the earth's rivers within IGS usually means an increase in man's power to distribute over large areas his destruction of natural diversity and stability (increasing the earth's entropy), and an increase in his ability to add demands for tapping other — and non-renewable — energy sources. The pylon, with its simple and rigid geometry and its ability to withstand only one particular type of simple strain is a useful symbol for underlining this aspect of IGS's relation to nature.



The Mardøla waterfall, surrounded by the lush forest and undergrowth dependent upon its incessant spray, is a suitable reminder of the stability-giving complexity that characterizes the evolution of life (its ability to decrease entropy; its creative force) on this planet — a complexity that, on land, is dependent upon rivers and creeks in natural flow.

To put it in simple and strong colors: The pylon is a symbol of "life frozen to rigid death"; the natural waterfall symbolizes the unfathomable potentialities of the life process itself.

The Mardøla waterfall has a special relation to the work and expansion of (snm). It is one of the highest waterfalls of the earth and drops straight from a high mountain lake into an extremely lush climax forest near another lake, vast and mirror-clear. It gives water to the exceptionally rich farm land of the Eikesdal valley. The Mardøla river is now being diverted from the valley, and will, from 1975, help American aluminum interests to survive as an important economic and political factor in Norway. In the summer of 1970, (snm) staged a five weeks' direct non-violent action to stop this hydroelectric project, keeping a tent camp pitched across the path of the earthmoving machines in the Eikesdal mountains. It was the first successful action joining farmers and city dwellers in fighting the IGS transformation in Norway (although it did not manage to stop the industrialization of Mardøla itself), and it largely intensified the Norwegian eco-political debate; among other effects, it contributed to the opinion build-up that resulted in Norway's "No" to joining the European Common Market (conceived by many Norwegians to be the clearest example in Europe of the IGS trend).

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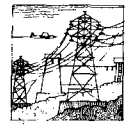
the individual and in the effectively cooperating group — of the complex ability to handle everything of importance relating to the home environment and the social organism as requirements change through the conceivable local range of possibilities. In many so-called "primitive" societies, it is this mastery that gives social prestige: A successful member of such a society possesses the very gradually and carefully evolved ability to take care of a vast range of possible threats to the ecological and social equilibrium of the local community. The leaders of such complex societies are those who, better than the others, prove their ability to take care of the *common* needs, who can draw on great resources of knowledge and inventiveness, and *who put this to use with more communal loyalty* than the average person. This may be viewed as competition — but it is not the individual competing to take opportunity away from other individuals, as we find it most often within our present-day Western society. It is a radically *different concept* of competition.

The complexity — and thus the equilibrium ability — of such a society is increased if it is also quite egalitarian in its economic, social, and political structure — that is, if it incorporates open communicative channels which allow individual talents to come to the forefront and contribute to its guidance as various needs may arise. There are many historical and contemporary societies which seem to have lost their flexibility and resourcefulness in the meeting of new ecological conditions through the loss of this kind of eco-egalitarian structure. The social and political élite of a class structure is likely to resist change in communications and control structures because that usually means a loss of power. The persons or families or class in power fortify their positions with taboos, customs, moral codes, religious systems, and laws of various kinds that may originally have had a sound ecological justification, but which also effected the ruling group's ascension to power. At one time this group may have functioned in line with the common good, but such a political élite usually lives quite protected from the direct threats of ecological change, and so tends to react belatedly; it is a "dull sensory organ" of the society it controls. For these two reasons — of power distribution and of ecological sensitivity — democracy seems to have a strong ecological justification. We might say that a society's *external equilibrium* — its ability to live in balance with its natural resources — is dependent upon its *internal equilibrium* — its effective combination of loyalty and individuality.

Our best example of a society showing disequilibrium in these respects is of course Western techno-capitalist society. Some of the Sherpa villages of Himalaya offer opposite examples of societies where the interdependency of external and internal equilibrium may be discerned through a vast range of qualitative levels.

One major factor in the shaping of the equilibrium quality of the Sherpa society is undoubtedly its isolation, demanding self-sufficiency and self-resourcefulness. Another important factor is its comparatively harsh set of natural conditions, demanding a great variation in ways of utilizing nature's resources, complex and well-programmed seasonal rhythms, and a high degree of effective cooperation. This suggests one reason why Sherpa and similar societies should be regarded as a vital source of knowledge to us today: The eco-crisis is about to create on a global scale conditions similar to those that Sherpa society has long had to cope with — scarce and hard-to-get-at resources, and isolation in the sense of "spaceship Earth". These changed conditions will also make themselves felt in the near future among the governing élites of our world — although not through any "inner revelations" among the members of these groups in power, but through naked material pressures and accompanying political upheavals. Time is also running out for all those Western intellectuals trying to outdo each other in the publishing market with hopeful fantasies on behalf of next generation's leisure society.

After the gigantic experiment of IGS, man will again have to seek equilibrium — and creative complexity — through his own hands' work on the earth, or else be buried under its surface.



Complexity and unity versus complication and disunity

The Sherpa society is an effectively long-lived Life Necessities Society.[13] It is a good illustration of the relationship between complexity and *unity:* Its unity — its wholeness — is an expression of its complexity, and its unified structure of complex relationships gives it flexibility and, thereby, survival strength. This multifactored inter-relatedness corresponds to what systems ecologists and communication theorists call "a structure with high information content". (Although information theory in its original and strict sense operates solely within the level of complication [Shannon and Weaver], it represents one of the takeoff points within Western science for a break with the tradition of analytical atomization of reality).

[13] *I.e.*, within a *quite* wide range of ecological calamities! It is now meeting one that seems to be outside this range: Western big-industry tourism. The disruptive, wild-growth effect of this outcrop of IGS reminds me of runaway cancer cells, leaving the original tumor along the blood vessels to start disruptions of equilibrium control in new localities of the organism. In medical language, this is called *metastasis* — another suitable word for eco-imperialism of the IGS kind.

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In keeping with the view outlined here, we must reach the conclusion that many tiny, "primitive", non-technical societies are complex, while the modern engineering masterpieces of the Western city societies are not so complex;[14] in them, we mistake complication for complexity. Not only is this social structure dominated by one qualitative level — complication — it is also very fragmented: many relationships that are functional and tight in the "primitive" society are here very weak or nonfunctional. People representing the environmental movement often show a lack of insight when they speak about the value of getting away from the "complexities" of the city and into a small rural community to lead a "simpler, less complicated life". If you are wealthy, you may of course while away your days in lazy simplicity in a rural village, but you would at the same time gradually break down your ego-complexity and thus your ability to live in creative equilibrium with your outer world — the world that you *are* part of, willingly or not. *Taking care of oneself* as a working member of a small-farm community is a good basis for expanding complexity, and also means getting nearer to a meaningful life.

We see today a great drive to centralize people from the rural communities and the small towns into the great metropolis. The planners are at work, creating vast suburbs from scratch, pouring people into the quickly finished product. It is not taken into consideration that these people come from different backgrounds and different kinds of communities, and that they arrive with their "roots in mother earth's soil" torn off. They are still expected to start functioning together in this drafting-board environment as a single balanced society! The whole burden of creating social and environmental complexity for a large social unit is here on the shoulders of a few experts with very nearly the same (and quite narrow) academic training. Even if this training were not one of learning that the world consists of units of complication, this task would be formidable; *with* such training it is certainly impossible.

Social complexity is built up very slowly over many generations, and primarily in small societies, where different survival problems and challenges in their various ramifications and complex inter-relatedness are not far removed and are faced in such a way that they can, in general, be grasped and mastered by anyone in that society and place, acting in finely evolved cooperation.

It is now high time that we teach our children to *look through* our society's glossy coat of surface diversity — to be able to see that it hides a skeleton of complication, a mechanical ghost adorned with dashes of "Disneyland effect" to keep people breathless and thrilled. Likewise, we must teach them to look through the outward appearance of "primitivism" in societies outside IGS — to see the extremely advanced complexity of intrasocial behavior and interplay with nature that often characterizes such societies. *Before* the crisis has become a catastrophe we should try to give them the ability to understand and to feel that the introduction of a car or a ski lift or a supermarket into a community may actually mean an *increase* in primitivism.

Our top-level experts are forever furnishing our top-level politicians with plans and projects in which people are treated as numerical quantities. Because these projects are viewed by these leaders as problems in complication, it remains hidden to them that they are dealing not only with particulate entities, but with systems that can be understood only as wholes. When they are "summing up" 10,000 new inhabitants in a new suburb,[15] they act as if they were assuming that these 10,000 will behave exactly as they did as members of their former communities; "a person is a person!" Instead, what happens is that these people start interacting in a radically new way because they are part of a radically new structure; we get not only a quantitatively larger and different society, but something much more consequential: a *qualitatively* different one. Because of the qualitative shift, it is misleading to speak of having "moved a community", or even to talk of the communal members as being the same persons. A person never exists in a vacuum; he is always an expression of the peculiarities of the social and ecological system he lives within.

This perspective cannot be grasped without treating society as a whole as a *basic unit*, and *this* unit yields to quantitative treatment only in a very limited way — so limited, in fact, that its results in most cases would be uninteresting.

It should also be noted here that studying societies as basic units (of the ecosystem type) entails a view of *causality* that breaks with Western scientific tradition. In order to predict the behavior of such units, it is necessary to take into account that they are *goal-seeking:* their goal is ecological equilibrium — which will, however, mean very different structures under different conditions. The built-in *tendency* of a system cannot be

[14] This is a conclusion directly opposite to the one reached by one of the pioneers of modern theoretical ecology, Ramon Margalef, who I think offers a good example of what happens when a biologist without any experience in sociology and anthropology casts his conceptual fishing net over human society. It is also tempting to say that theoreticians like Margalef are not neutral observers in the political and ideological sense; what they say could never have come from a person with a background in LNS, nor in the lower classes of IGS. If you live in a big city slum, it is difficult to look upon yourself as a contributor to enhanced complexity.

[15] Or in a new "super-ecology town" of the kind we are now getting near Minneapolis and in Arizona, where the idea of repairing existing cities is finally abandoned as futile, and "creating all anew" is the great formula. The fashionable, pseudo-ecological phraseology accompanying such experiments reveal the IGS-background of the authors very clearly. Extreme examples are Marshall McLuhan with his view of electronic systems as extensions of man's sensory organs and as the communicative networks of "global villages" to come, and Buckminster Fuller, who is systematically violating one of the basic hypotheses of social ecology in planning a world where homes are standard units easily movable anywhere — their content of human beings trained to happy acceptance of a life with no roots. The great popularity of these two is of course politically very welcome to the IGS establishment!

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Theodore Roszak's books The Making of a Counter Culture *(New York 1969) and* Where the Wasteland Ends *(London 1972) are strongly recommended. Likewise, Edward Goldsmith's analyses in* A Blueprint for Survival: *"Social Systems and their Disruption"* (The Ecologist, *Jan. 1972), "Bringing Order to Chaos — Cybernetics, Society and the Ecosystem"* (The Ecologist, *July and Aug. 1970), and his series "Towards a Unified Science" (which has been running at intervals in* The Ecologist *since this British monthly started in the fall of 1970). Goldsmith's "purist" way of utilizing cybernetic models for the analysis of human societies has produced many interesting ideas, and our conversation with him at the Stockholm Conference in 1971, where we brought up the type of organization represented by the EEC, seemed to indicate that the "Blueprint Model" may be interpreted to give political implications approaching those of (snm)'s ecopolitics. We feel, however, that a combination of cybernetic systems analysis with "critical sociology" of a kind related to the Frankfurter School (Habermas, Marcuse) and other recent schools deriving from dialectic materialism, added to a way of grasping the world originating in a childhood on a farm, in a fishing village, or under urban circumstances well outside the interest structure of IGS, gives an important supplementary corrective — maybe even a qualitatively different mesh of cognitive and emotional threads, better suited for catching contemporary reality than more well-combed models originating primarily within specific sectors of academic research.*

One reason why A Blueprint for Survival *seems to us to be quite poor in political leverage, is that it does not build its analysis of society significantly upon the relations of material production within IGS. Major conflicts in economic interests are therefore outside* Blueprint's *view, and it is hardly possible to engage the masses in a politically significant way if it is not shown that there is a connection between the deterioration of the environment — a real threat to their material existence — and their lack of economic power. And: if our political aim is the equilibrium society with its systemic control (Goldsmith's phrase), we have to reach it through the masses — through the people making up the broad base of the social system. If we try to do it "from above" — through asystemic control — we will get lost on the way; "The way is part of the goal", to quote Gandhi! It seems likely to us that if this latter approach is employed, more of the "checks" enabling discovery and elimination of IGS "security valves" on the theory will be at the social critic's disposal.*

Another important "leverage point outside the system" for seeing it objectively may be acquired through practical work with ordinary people for longer periods within communities belonging to a non-Western culture. (This is one of the reasons why members of the (snm) group have travelled to Nepal twice for in-culture work and human ecology study in a small, isolated Sherpa community).

Preparing for the task of "discovering IGS" in this manner, the picture of society and of man studying himself becomes increasingly complex, but also less vulnerable to criticism of various kinds from people who have built up frustration through years of direct and practical political struggle. (Criticism of "The biologistic approach" has been voiced, e.g., by many readers in letters to The Ecologist *and in a series of articles in the Danish periodical* Information *during 1972). On the other hand, I feel that some of the Marxist criticism of* Blueprint *and of the work of the System Dynamics Group at M.I.T. is equally lacking in scope because of narrow academic background and traditional bias towards anything that isn't clearly and traditionally dialectic. First of all, the new situation requires a new kind of openness — an uncommon readiness to gather tools from many corners and to interpret theories in other directions than was intended by their originators, if need be. Let us have less energy spent on theories about the possible false steps of other workers within the environmentalist movement, and instead concentrate on the positive task of building the widest possible base for insight into a world that is rapidly undergoing total qualitative change, warning us that all old theories may fall.*

mapped out by the traditional means — by breaking the system up into its *component parts* and limiting causal explanation to the interaction of *these* parts in the *past*. Neither can a dynamic system be *observed* — one has only static glimpses of its parts — and it cannot be the object for scientific experimentation. Empirical work within human ecology *presupposes* an equilibrium model; *i.e.*, a logical construction. In this way, ecological science is "less empirical" and "more deductive" than what has been demanded by Western scientific method for the past two- to three-hundred years. It is even tempting to say that research based on the ecosystems model of the world is restoring *rationalism* to a more respectable position, and simultaneously dethroning empiricism as man's guiding star through the night of phenomenal turmoil. It has a slight taste of paradox when we consider that ecology at the same time tries to restore to honor the *sensual* world — stressing that our own eyes and skin are in many ways far superior to scientific apparatus and for scientific purposes.

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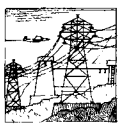
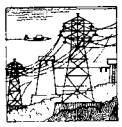
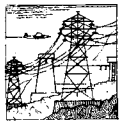
Complication and disunity: IGS's grand tool for political power turned into a time bomb

What are said to be measures ensuring complexity and unity are most often a cover for treating humanity and its resources as disjointed units. The political effect of this is 1) a gradual destruction of the possibilities of effective cooperation in groups of potential political opposition, and 2) a blocking of a corresponding awareness of what is happening. The shaping of modern society into a one-sided structure of complication is on the one hand serving the production rationale of techno-capitalism; on the other hand it is enforcing a streamlined version of rigid class structure upon its human subjects. The majority inhabiting the bottom sector of the IGS power pyramid *cannot be allowed* to develop an ego-complexity anywhere nearly as strong as their leaders', because that would mean their effective refusal to function as quantities; then they could not be programmed, and statistical forecasts would break down all the time. The most functional citizen of IGS is one with no protruding edges — one who has the slippery shape of a simple disc — well suited to slide through the centrally designed pipe system of modern techno-society.

Should this "pipe system" of IGS break apart, however — for instance through a shift in the world's political power structure with a corresponding shift in the network for distribution of materials and energy, as a result of war or drastic bio-ecological change — if such a thing should happen, then the standardized structure of IGS and the lack of complexity in its individual members would immediately show up as extreme ecosocial vulnerability: The majority of its members, trained to function as "simple discs", would reveal their complete dependency upon the tubular guidance of the "pipe system" to which they had been honed and fitted. Their lack of individual self-reliance and resourcefulness, as well as their corresponding lack of ability to cooperate for common social goals, would be catastrophic in the qualitatively new situation.

Ecopolitical conclusion

There are growing numbers of persons and study groups who feel that there can be no effective solution to the crisis through using the existing control bodies or through putting more experts and specialists into central governing or advisory positions. As long as we possess the present educational schemes and recruiting procedures, these are — most of them — completely part of the dynamism of IGS.

Instead, we must seek to educate *generalists* — people who are rich in ego-complexity, who have some knowledge within many fields, who are trained in *inter*-disciplinary reasoning in relation to the problems of *whole* systems and societies, and who are able to transmit all this in a language that the non-academicians (the world's vast majority!) understand. In order to act effectively in accordance with this latter, extremely important point, it is necessary for the person under training to relate his insight effectively and understandably to the everyday life struggle of the people. To accomplish this, I think it is necessary that a major part of the students of generalism be recruited among young people with backgrounds outside or on the fringe of IGS; otherwise their grasp of problems is apt to be tainted by that system.

The main idea here is to disconnect our schools (including the universities) from the interests of the IGS leadership and connect them instead to the interests of the people — *i.e.*, to the oppressed and manipulated majority today constituting the lower strata and colonial sectors of the IGS power pyramid.[16]

In order to reverse the ecocrisis, our main goal must lie in the direction of mobilizing into new widespread alliances for political action those masses who most directly suffer from the crisis. The leaders of our societies — either in private industry and business, or in national and international administration and politics — live in ways that protect them from direct and vivid contact

16 In Norway (snm) is, among other things, attempting a move in this direction through the creation of *Environmental Schools*, located in some mountain valleys and on some islands off the coast of North Norway — *i.e.*, in some communities that are as yet only slightly affected by IGS. These schools are planned so that they will not clearly be distinguished from the local communities where they are situated; besides some "eco-generalists", most of the teachers are to be local farmers and fishermen and their wives, and will treat the students as they would their own sons and daughters.

Another (snm) group project in the same general vein was started in 1971 with a three months' stay in Nepal and consists of intensified studies of equilibrium societies of different cultures, these societies being seen as sources of advanced eco-social knowledge. A second group is in Nepal this year. (A one-hour 16 mm film from the 1971 journey is available. It focuses on equilibrium relations in an isolated Himalayan village, contrasting these with corresponding disequilibrium relations in Western society. The film has English spoken commentary).

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with the crisis. At the same time they have much to lose by a systems shift, while the masses have much or everything to gain, and so — at least in the third world — are more free in relation to IGS.

An effective *eco*politics today points in the opposite direction from what most writers and speakers within the field of international relations are relying upon as political means to the attainment of security and stability. In contrast to them, we should strive for a *breaking up* of the type of "peaceful coexistence" that we now seem to be achieving in the Euro-American sector of the world. The control system that is now in the making in the offices and assemblies of top-level politics constitutes a further freezing of the eco-critical power structure.

In our western midst, the Icelandic nation offers us today a useful illustration of what we are up against and of the way we must go: We have here a nation that would be destroyed, together with its fisheries, if it relied upon the "peaceful coexistence system". Instead, we see a small, comparatively egalitarian and united community defying the "European system" in fighting for the preservation of its own resources of life necessities for the generations to come. It is, simultaneously, fighting to preserve a natural resource on behalf of mankind — and showing that the only reliable guardians for the food resources of our grandchildren are those whose own lives are directly bound up with them today.

Communities fighting in this manner, and the starving and suffering millions of the third world — all those whose own skin is burnt by the heat of the industrial-growth ovens — are today the only effective sensory organs of the global community. It is from *their* angle we must rediscover the world. Their suffering, their anguish, the futility of their effort as long as IGS persists — these facts must tear the veil from our eyes and pull the plugs out of our ears. Their struggle to gain freedom must become our own struggle, and their direct, everyday toil to save morsels of soil and keep the earth green to sustain life lastingly must become our own point of departure into a new world. □

F. D. REEVE

AVOCADOS IN A KITCHEN

Art is the giant beans of which
these stalks and vines forswear reminders;
or should we say old metaphors
like hacks trot easily in blinders?

Do not dig deep: A Chinese box
has hidden meanings, but this plant
strips in the sun, a paradox
of urban fingers and green cant.

Internal rhymes that join with care
hold hard against the metered tide.
The ripe words float an old man's hope
whose wooden lines are labefied.

Not serious this, the young would say:
Old verbs, old men, like empty fields,
should be remaindered; Achilles and we
carry the world on our bronze shields.

When I was sandy-haired I fought
for social change and verbal power,
but in this sunlit kitchen I
imagine one leaf that lasts forever.

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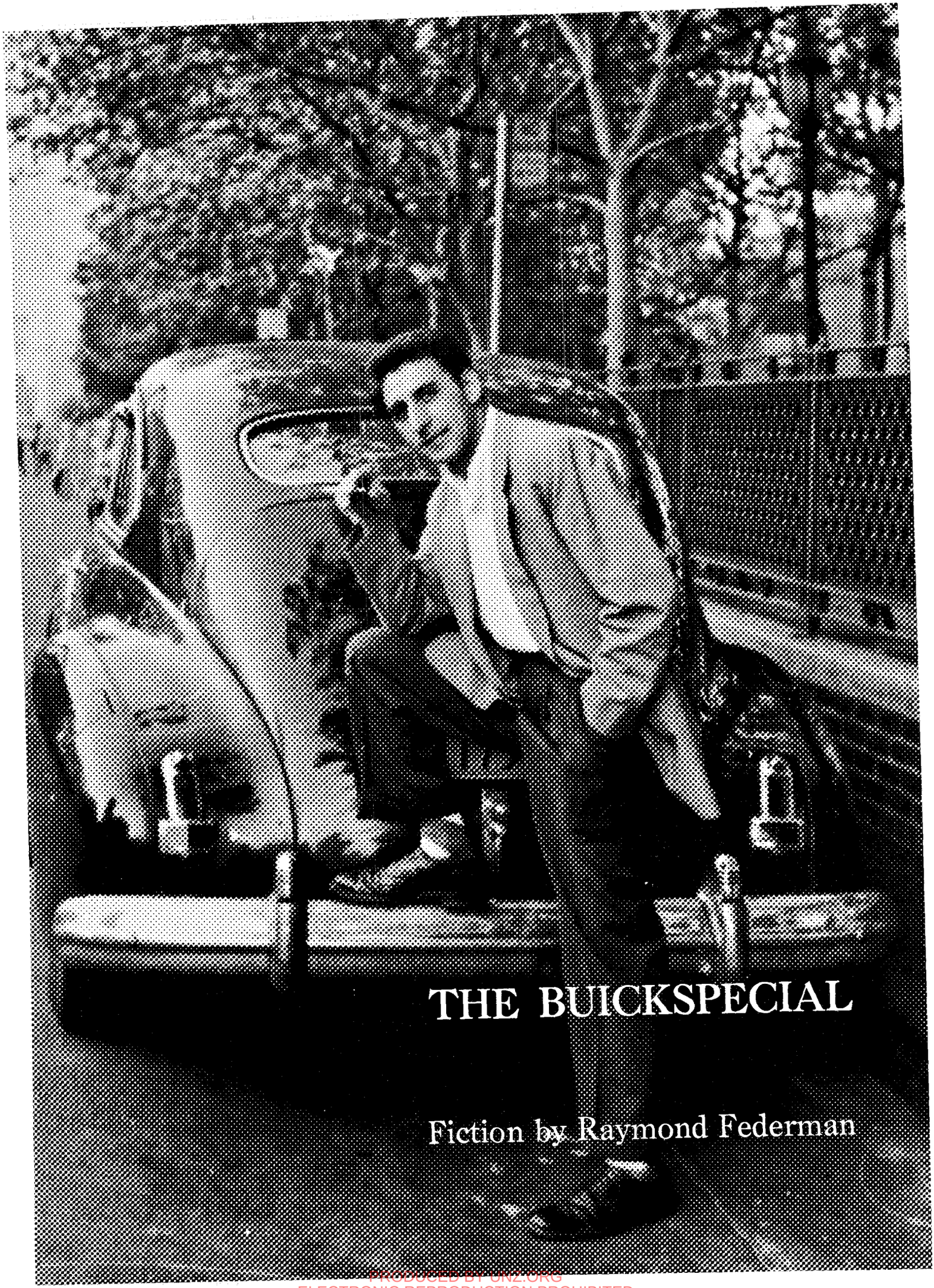

THE BUICKSPECIAL

Fiction by Raymond Federman

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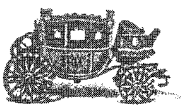
Body by Fisher



BETTER BY FAR

I was on my way to CAMP DRUM. Upper New York State (near the Canadian border). 1952. February 1952 to be exact. In the middle of a brutal snow storm. Quite unexpected.

I was driving my old beat-up 47 BUICKSPECIAL. Black. Doing about 12 miles an hour on a potholed icy road in VERMONT. The shortest way to CAMP DRUM I was assured.

Four in the morning.

There was a deep gully on my right. Very dangerous I tell you. Real precipice. It had been following the road for miles now. Visibility zero! Bald tires on my Buick. Lucky the heater is working. What an enormous banana wagon my BUICKSPECIAL! A tank. Radio isn't working. To keep awake. To take my mind off my troubles I'm whistling jazz tunes to myself. Improvising. To pass the time. And also not to think about that damn gully to my right.

Already four days on the road!

I was driving up to CAMP DRUM. It was because my outfit (the glorious gutsy spitshined 82nd AIRBORNE DIVISION) had been sent up there to the snows of Upper New York State to practice parachute jumps in the snow!

But me I had been left behind. FORT BRAGG (Fayetteville, North Carolina — of all places!) In the fog. I was being shipped Overseas. Yes, to the FAR EAST. Korea to be precise. I had volunteered.

All the guys thought I was out of my mind. Some kind of a nut. A weak suicidal case. A psycho. The nervous type. VOLUNTEER! You're CRAZY man!

Bunch of hillbillies!

So when my outfit packed to take off on maneuvers (imagine that!) up in the snows of Upper New York the Captain told me I wasn't going with the rest of the regiment. To practice parachute jumps in the snow. Incredible!

No. Me, I had to wait for travel orders. And then had 30 days (a whole month's vacation you might say) to get my ass to San Francisco. That's where you'll embark. For the FAR EAST. The Captain explained.

And then they took off. The whole regiment. By trucks. In a cloud of dust at dawn. And I stayed behind (in the fog) at FORT BRAGG waiting for my orders. And finally my orders came. But they had screwed up! They didn't have my travel expenses and also the one month's pay (the one month's pay in advance) they were supposed to pay me. Normal procedure. Those mothers had sent my papers and my money (typical error!) up to the snows. All my payroll documents (that's what the fat sergeant at Headquarters called them) left for CAMP DRUM in that cloud of dust with the rest of the regiment.

I was screwed! The best thing to do (that fat nervous staff sergeant at the Headquarters explained) is for you to get your ass MAN up to CAMP DRUM to collect your dough. If not might take a good week or two for your damn papers to get back down here. At the most I had twenty bucks left.

That really bugged the shit out of me. But I had never seen that part of the country before. A little detour North before heading West I told myself. Why not! With twenty bucks and my old 47 BUICKSPECIAL should be able to get that far. After that we'll see.

It would be dumb of me to try crossing AMERICA without my money. And a month's pay in advance (plus travel expenses!), in those days (I was a corporal), that's almost 250 bucks. With or without my Buick I could have a really nice cozy trip seeing the country. A marvelous vacation! Discovering AMERICA up & down & across.

So there I was! On this shitty narrow icy road in VERMONT. Four in the morning or thereabout. After four days' driving (in the rain mostly and now in the snow) with a quick stopover in New York.

A little rest so to speak. In Brooklyn to be exact. To get rid of all my possessions which I'd left with Marilyn. My civilian possessions. My half dozen books my jazz records (mostly 78s) my tweed sport coat with patches on the sleeves and my two pairs of pants my three shirts my underwear socks etc. All that piled in that black suitcase I've been lugging around for years. And my typewriter. Portable Underwood. Used of course. A whole life to dispose of. To hock, in fact! But for the time being stored away in Marilyn's closet.

Suitcases and closets. That sums up a life. And typewriters too. And ultimately pawn shops. But at the time all that shoved away in a closet. Marilyn's closet with her brooms and her vacuum cleaner.

Ah, Marilyn! What a woman! She was Benny's wife. My former boss when I worked full time in his lampshade factory on Flatbush Avenue before I was drafted into the Army. Marilyn! Wow what a gorgeous woman (29 years old). Beautiful body. Enormous boobs. Big black eyes. I was about 22 then. And quite naive!

What a set up we had. What a tremendous deal! Very sneaky. But I'll skip the details — a guy must have some decency. She was really sad (even cried) when I told her they're shipping me Overseas. But don't worry I'll come back I swore to her. You don't think I'm going to let them shoot my ass full of holes. Be careful! She cried. And kissed me. Dearest love she said to me as I waved goodbye!

Anyway after that quick stop in Brooklyn. Just time to say goodbye (and all the rest) to Marilyn in a crummy motel room in Long Island there I was in the middle of the night in an incredible snow storm way up in VERMONT on my way to CAMP DRUM (near the Canadian border) to collect my money before heading out West

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across country. Across the Mississippi the great plains the rolling hills the Rockies the desert! Wow was I going to see things! Cowboys Indians perhaps gangsters in Chicago and rattlesnakes! Play crap in Las Vegas! See movie stars in Hollywood! Discover the whole lay out! Up & Down & Across. I had a hard-on just thinking about it!

Okay, I'll skip the details of all the adventures and misadventures I'd had since I left North Carolina. In my BUICKSPECIAL with my duffle bag. The unfortunate encounters and the unexpected incidents. Suffice to say that so far I had been robbed by an intellectual, almost raped by an old pederast, abused, deceived, that I was dead tired, and that my Buick was now dragging its ass on its last leg. At most I had a quarter tank (not even) of gas left. And not a penny in my pocket. Out of cigarettes too.

If I make it to CAMP DRUM I'll get rid of that damn Buick. Should be able to get 25 bucks for it in a junk yard. After that we'll see. I'll bum rides along the way. I'll thumb my way across AMERICA.

Therefore, everything is going well. So far! Except for the snow and the icy road. Visibility zero! What soup out there!

Quarter past four. At least my watch is still working. No pawn shops around here. So here I am on that stinking disgusting slippery road with twinkles in my eyes hanging on to the steering wheel with both hands. My windshield wipers screeching on the glass. Makes me nervous.

We'll go as far as we can. About three gallons of gas left. I estimate. Damn tank! Wow does it gargle up gasoline! And it puffs it farts burps like an old dying horse. Let's keep going though but without pressing too hard on the gas pedal. To save. To economize. I've got the steering wheel well in hand because this time it's really slippery. I'm almost out of control.

I'm going downhill now and there is a dangerous curve (that's what the yellow sign said) can't see too well my BUICKSPECIAL (that old pile of junk!) gets all excited and suddenly there she goes sliding sideways I throw both feet on the brake pedal the damn boat hops to the left hits her ass against the snow embankment jerks rears bounces back right in the middle of the road SHIT straightens up I've got my arms all twisted around the steering wheel trying to take the curve the rear tires skid and my wagon slides around as though she wanted to go back uphill full of fear the motor whines into the night I give her a kick in the belly right on the gas pedal she lets out a groan of pain the tires roar she lowers her front end and like a wild black panther there goes my BUICKSPECIAL leaping head first over the embankment diving full speed into the gully!

I had warned you about that dangerous precipice!

Here we go! That's it. I'm dead! I can feel my balls deflating. My blood rushing through my arteries for the last time. It's all over!

I wrap myself around the steering wheel fold my legs upward to protect my private parts. Normal reaction. My eyes of course are shut tight!

SO LONG LIFE!

CRASH . . . BANG . . . SPLASH . . . SMASH! I feel atrocious pain all over. Blood pissing out of my mouth nose ears. I feel the taste of death under my tongue. A vision of my whole family (my mother weeping my father shouting my sisters screaming) flashes in my mind from beyond the grave . . . and everything stops!

But I'm neither dead nor at the bottom of the gully. I'm simply suspended in a dead faint. In a pile of coniferous apples. For in fact rising majestically from the bottom of the gully a giant pine tree an enormous pine tree had spread its boughs to receive my Buick in full flight and she had landed head first (like an angel) into the salutary branches of that big beautiful Christmas tree well rooted at the bottom of the gully.

At this very spot the gully must have been at least 100 feet deep. I'm not exaggerating though it was hard to judge exactly in the darkness.

What a shock!

I had bells ringing in my head. Stars flying in my eyes. Butterflies whirling in my stomach as I slowly regained consciousness. The wheels of my Buick were still turning wildly into empty space. The horn was stuck howling its cry of despair into the night.

The windshield was in pieces. But the blow of the accident had jostled my radio into action and for a brief moment a sad feminine voice sang THE BLUES IN THE NIGHT and then went out. And now the gasping motor let out a final fart of vapor at the very moment when my headlights extinguished themselves.

My BUICKSPECIAL recoiled upon itself! Twisted itself into a last spasm of agony. Turned to junk on the spot. High in the branches of this miraculous pine tree!

And then all was silence and darkness!

I feel blood still running on my face and neck. I'm torn to pieces. Tattered! And my left shoulder is hurting like hell!

But one must regain taste for life! Or at least one cannot remain suspended there like a jerk or like an acrobat or as my friend Sam used to say of similar situations suspended in this nightmare thingness into which I am fallen (or in this case he would have to say into which I am risen) at four-thirty-seven in the morning (needless to specify though I did manage to glance quickly at my watch just as my Buick flew over the embankment — but now that good old faithful time piece is also crushed to pieces). NO! I cannot remain there like some nocturnal bird perched on a tree branch. The wind could perchance make us tumble down from the height of this great perch into the depth of this immense hole beneath where certainly this time we would indeed leave forever whatever is left of life in us.

And already I can feel a vague oscillation!

Quickly through the broken car window on the

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driver's side (since the doors are stuck) I extricate myself from this twisted pile of metallic junk.

I grab my big G.I. duffle bag from the back seat and find myself in precarious balance like a night owl on a branch — an evergreen branch heavy with snow and dry pine cones — my heart pounding madly after this frightening accident which could have been fatal!

Can you visualize the scene?

Can you imagine? Our story could have ended there. The collecting of my money! The GREAT journey West! The magnificent discovery of AMERICA! All that could have ended at the bottom of that unfathomable precipice! Way up in VERMONT. And you would never have heard the rest.

Therefore suspended on this bough. Arms spread out to better keep my balance I glanced for the last time towards my Buick — a most affectionate glance towards my beautiful Buick which had served me so well up to this place but now reduced to a mere pile of buckled metal and broken glass recoiling upon itself like a crushed snail folded upon the remains of its glorious past existence as one of the fine proud American cars but now just a pitiful stack of GENERAL MOTORS junk!

The wind suddenly calmed down. And from behind the clouds the Moon sneaked out quietly to look over the scene.

For a moment I had a total vision of the situation and I will never forget it! My 1947 BUICKSPECIAL ass up in the air hanging in the evergreen branches stretched out like the arms of some saintly figure. Ah what a spendid tree I said to myself. What a divine tree! A true Pieta!

I managed to hook my duffle bag to a branch and slowly carefully painfully tiptoed towards the debris of my car like a tightrope walker on his wire arms outstretched. JESUS CHRIST! I screamed into the night. What the hell am I doing up here? And almost fell off!

When I reached my old Buick sprawled there like a clumsy baboon I gave her an affectionate kick in the rear tire closest to me.

SO LONG YOU DEAR OLD BUICK I murmured with sobs in my voice. GOODBYE YOU BIG TANK! FAREWELL SPECIAL BUICK! CHARIOT OF MY DREAMS! I sniffled a bit and then as I tiptoed away on my branch I said poetically: May angels guide Thee to eternal rest in the Paradise of junk! FARE THEE WELL!

Well I'll skip the horrendous details of my ascension back up on the road where eventually I managed to scramble on all fours with my big duffle bag my G.I. uniform torn to pieces my teeth chattering blood stains all over and where eventually I sat down (collapsed rather) on a mount of snow with horrible pains all over my body — pains which I hardly dare describe so horribly painful were they. My duffle bag rolled next to me like a wounded animal. It was full of blood and holes so much had it been tossed around during the accident. Torn pieces of pants shirts underwear socks etc. were dripping out of it.

It was not a pretty spectacle! And even worse. Below me lost in the darkness now (ass up in the air) (tires torn to shreds) that heap of BUICKjunk!

What a mess!

Alone on this lonely deserted road (Up in VERMONT) robbed, raped, abused, deceived, and now without any means of transportation, BUICKless, penniless, arms and legs hurting, frozen to the bones, starving, ALONE, and not even a cigarette left (the last cigarette of the condemned man) but nevertheless still on my way to CAMP DRUM, I almost wept!

Yes! I almost allowed myself this moment of weakness. But I held back. It would have been useless.

Around me only emptiness. Nothing! Nothingness! Nobody! Only the snow. The dark of night. And the cold.

And so I waited!

I waited like that. Hurting all over. For hours. Two. Three.

Four. I seemed to have lost the notion of time. And in fact

I had lost it. And also the notion of space.

I was in total nothingness! In complete LESSNESSness where nothing is even less than nothing! If that's possible. That's approximately how I felt and where I was. I was (if I may say so — metaphorically speaking) in SHIT up to my neck!

Useless to try walking (I decided) with my heavy duffle bag and my terrible pains.

To pass the time. But especially not to freeze to death. I began hopping from leg to leg in the middle of the road. I did all kinds of gymnastics in spite of the pains and the bells still ringing inside my head and also in spite of my left shoulder which I could hardly move now.

I gesticulated. Capered about. Bounced around. Just to hang on. To survive! If not I would die on the spot. Yes I could feel life quickly abandoning me. Courage deserting me. And on top of that I was hungry like hell. Anything for a cigarette!

It's all over! Must have been 20° below! I had a disgusting vision of myself frozen like a scarecrow in the middle of the road.

But SUDDENLY in the distance two beams of light gliding like fire on the snow probing the whiteness like the eyes of some giant monster rushing towards me to devour me. A CAR!

AN AUTOMOBILE! I jump in the middle of the road wave to that monster gesticulate shout scream stamp my feet rage raise my arms and legs (in spite of the pain and the fatigue) hop leap rear roll myself on the ground crawl climb on top of a snow pile fall on my ass pull out my handkerchief (full of blood) wave it furiously cuff my trembling hands around my mouth to shout louder stick out my thumb!

The car glides to a smooth stop in front of me without even skidding on the ice. It's an enormous car. A Chrysler. Black. I notice that immediately. An Imperial! I know my American cars. That one must have at least 420 horse power. The window slides down electrically and a head with splendid eyes appears (head of a woman useless to

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say at the stage where we are). An incredible beauty! Looks like a fairy queen or the heroine of a Victorian novel. Sensual deep blue eyes full of compassion. Compassionate enough to make you melt of love on the spot.

I lurch forward!

What is it young man? (A soft languorous voice).

An ACCIDENT! A TERRIBLE accident! Here, come and see!

She steps out of her Chrysler wraps herself in a magnificent fur coat (mink of course). She's tall slim and svelte. Gorgeous legs to give you an erection on the spot. A delight to watch as she passes before the car's headlights. She hardly touches the ground. As though the snow did not exist.

She leans over the gully.

CAREFUL! I shout as I gently grab her arm.

Oh, is that funny! What's that in the tree? Your car?

Yes . . . my BUICK!

She turns towards me and in the lights of the car sees that I'm wounded.

But you're wounded young . . . young soldier! (She must have noticed my uniform, or what's left of it). We have to take care of you immediately! Quick! I'll take you to my doctor!

Blood must have started dripping again from my wounds after all the gymnastics I did to have myself noticed.

Hurry! Get in! You need medical attention.

I throw my duffle bag on the back seat (somewhat ashamed of its ragged condition) slide next to her on the front seat (the car seemed perfumed) and she steps on the gas. The car floats on the snow like a boat on a smooth surface of water. She must have special snow tires because in spite of the speed (the female was doing 70 miles an hour) the huge car hardly skids.

My teeth were chattering like a pair of castanets.

You must be frozen poor dear one! How long were you out there?

I don't know. Hours! Maybe more. You know at this time of night and in such a weather there isn't much traffic.

Poor boy! Lucky for you I was on my way home. I was playing bridge at the house of some friends [at 4:37 in the morning! What a sneaky broad! She must have spent the night with some guy — her lover — but of course she didn't want to tell me and, to be honest, it's none of my business] . . . You're a soldier?

Yes! A paratrooper!

Oh, a paratrooper! That must be dangerous! [damn right] . . . Are you Italian by any chance? You have a charming accent.

Italian! Me? No, I'm French! [They always pull that one on me. Because of my black hair, I suppose, and my big nose. They always take me for a lousy macaroni. I ask you! Do I look like an Italian?]

Poor paratrooper! She said. What were you doing out there? In the middle of the night on top of a tree? Did you fall out of a plane?

I giggle a little but the giggle turns to a groan of pain.

Sorry! She said. But what are you doing in the American army anyway if you're French?

Oh, it's a long story. I was almost ready to unload my whole story but I was so cold the words froze inside my throat.

But you're trembling like a leaf! Listen, I live just a few minutes away from here. Perhaps it'll be better if I take you home with me. At this time of night especially. We can always call the doctor from my house if necessary.

I was not going to say no. Particularly since now (even though I was trying not to show it too much) my shoulder was hurting like hell. And then one never knows with such unexpected apparitions. Anything can happen.

Yes! I think it's better. And quicker too I said to this charming lady to make her understand that I agreed with her suggestion.

We arrive!

What a place! A castle! A palace! A fantastic mansion! This time I'm really in a dream. A fairy tale!

We go in!

I'm stunned. Dumbfounded by the richness the vastness the elegance the luxury the splendor of this abode.

You live here alone? I finally dare ask.

No, with my husband, of course. He's a banker.

That cools me off a bit.

He's on a business trip, in Boston, until tomorrow evening.

That warms me up a bit.

Yes. In fact that's why I was playing bridge with my friends. I hate to stay home alone when Gordon is away.

[at 4:30 in the morning in a weather like this! That bitch's got nerve. Lucky for me though. If not I would certainly have died out there like a dog on this lousy deserted road]

Do sit down, please, she said with a lovely hospitable smile. No, not here! There on the sofa.

I collapse into a brown leather sofa of maddening softness and depth. She disappears for a moment and comes back with a whole collection of little vials and some cotton. In the bright light of the room she's even more beautiful, more stunning than before. I rub my eyes to make sure I'm not dreaming. Even pinch my thigh to prove to myself that I'm not asleep or unconscious. She's standing next to me now. If she touches me I faint. Wow! is she beautiful! Golden blond hair! Eyes blue like the ocean! The Pacific. Skin soft and white like sour cream! A real goddess! I'm ready to convert on the spot! About 32 at the most. And so kind. So gentle. So full of warmth

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and delicate gestures. To give you confidence again in mankind. She puts one of her lovely hands on my head and with the other she gently rubs my wounds. I let out a little shriek. Does it hurt? Just a little I say. But I have to do it or else you'll get infected.

I give myself completely. She notices that my clothes are soaked and torn and that my left shoulder is bloody. You must take these off immediately she urges. I was not going to give her an argument.

Follow me!

We are in the bedroom now. She takes out a rich red silk robe from the closet. It's Gordon's she explains who is on a business trip in Boston. And she quickly unbuttons my vest my shirt and all the rest and in seconds I find myself bare chested (but in my khaki G.I. underwear) standing in front of her. Trembling! I breathe deeply to expand my chest. She's bandaging my shoulder now. Softly gently carefully and with a great deal of know-how. Funny! I don't even have a hard-on. When she's finished with the shoulder she gives me a friendly tap on the back then she leans forward and kisses my right shoulder softly. It was as though a bird had touched me lightly with the tip of its white wing.

I feel dizzy. Sort of split in half. No! That's not it. I feel soft and somewhat wobbly. She notices it because she asks don't you feel well? I say yes with my head.

Here, why don't you stretch on the bed for a while.

I jump on top of the bed. King size. An ocean of softness.

No, no! Not on top of the blankets. Get inside. Rest for a while and warm up. I'll be right back. I'll go put on something more comfortable and bring you a nice hot grog to pep you up.

She disappears again and I sink into the delicious waves of the mattress and the soft and voluptuous sheets. In three minutes I'm snoring like a dolphin feeling myself floating into the kingdom of dreams. □

[THE READER MAY IF HE WISHES INDULGE IN HIS OWN ALTERNATE FANTASIES IN THE SPACE PROVIDED BELOW.]

(If more space is needed please use your own paper, preferably 8½ x 11)

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A STORY BY JUDITH LAVINSKY

THE ENEMIES

Trapped in the kitchen cabinet the mouse contented himself with the peanuts and the bag of onions. It was going to be a long winter. Even in their bedroom they could hear the mouse rustling, munching, scratching frantically at the barricaded door. Becher wanted the mouse dead but dead out of his sight, off his property. It was one more thing to cope with, the final straw. He pulled the pillow over his ear and fought for sleep, counting his receivables until the promised monies comforted him into a confused dream. The mouse was in his office, eating undeposited checks, eating the mail containing checks from clients. Its tiny forepaws were like hands and it posed on its haunches, a half eaten dollar bill in its mouth. The mouse was in the money drawer beside him as he tried to work, and the noises of its eating echoed strangely in the metal desk.

He woke. The room was black. His wife stirred slightly, murmuring in a foreign tongue, caught in a dream. He waited breathless for some sound from the kitchen but the mouse was quiet, deep in a full-bellied sleep. If he could rig a net. In his imagination Becher described the net. It would fit over the cabinet door. It could be pressed and held against the cabinet frame, forming a seal, but then how could he open the door? The netting itself would be flexible—a fabric like cheese cloth only stronger—and he could pull the door handle through the fabric. When the door opened the mouse would jump into the net—but what would keep it from jumping out again when he moved the net away from the cabinet? He could tie a noose around the net and when the mouse was far enough in he could draw the noose tight and trap it. Already he could see the complications. He would have to open the door, wait for the mouse to jump into the net, close the door, and draw the noose all while holding the mouth of the net tight against the cabinet. The scheme was impractical. He would have to think of something else.

Magda muttered to herself again and rolled over on her side, buttocks toward him. He curled himself around her symmetrically, twin fetuses in a womb of quilts, and fell asleep.

In the morning there was no sound from the cupboard.

"Do you think he's dead?" Becher asked, fearing and hoping at the same time.

"Not in my cabinet he can't die. He's sleeping, probably. They are nocturnal, mice." She cracked eggs into a bowl and beat them cruelly with her silver whip. Becher retreated to the bathroom. In the dark cabinet how did the mouse know what time it was? He reached for the switch and turned it off. Light came in around the door. Even without a window he could tell that it was day. Magda's house shoes blocked the bottom of the frame of light.

"Come eat," she said. "It's ready."

He took his place and she served him, waiting for him to start before she sat down and served herself. It was an old custom and it annoyed him but there was nothing he could do. Like her accent, it refused to go away. He ate quickly, his eyes on his plate. They never talked until the food was gone. When he was finished he stood up abruptly.

"I'll be late. I have to go."

"And what are we doing for the mouse?" she cried.

"I'll ask at work. Leave it alone for now." He took his hat and coat and left before she could protest.

When he reached his office the nightmare suddenly returned. He went directly to his desk, still in his overcoat and hat, but when he reached the money drawer he paused. What if the dream were true? Stranger things had happened to men just like himself.

"Mr. Becher, there's a call for you." The voice in the box on his desk often spoke to him. In another time that would have been a mystery too. He turned the switch on the intercom and picked up the phone.

While he was talking he took off his hat and coat and signaled to his secretary to remove them for him. Still standing with the receiver cradled on his shoulder he unlocked the money drawer and slid it open cautiously. Everything was in place as he had left it the night before. Relieved, he hung up the phone and promptly forgot what he promised the caller he would do.

Just before lunch he called his associate into his office. The young man, just out of law school, stood skittishly behind a chair until Becher told him to sit down.

"What should I do about a mouse?" he asked.

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"A mouse?" The young man looked bewildered.

"A mouse. It's in a kitchen cabinet. The latch is sprung and the door won't stay shut. It got into the cabinet last evening. We pushed the kitchen table against the door to keep it closed."

The young man squirmed in his chair.

"That is the fact situation," Becher said. "What's your analysis?"

"Well, I don't know. My wife takes care of that kind of thing."

"What does she do?"

"I'm not sure. Actually I don't think we've ever had a mouse."

Becher was annoyed and the young man could see it. He contracted in the chair, mouselike himself under his employer's gaze. Becher waved him away. "That's all I need from you now. Go to work, go to lunch. I'll ask somebody else."

The associate fled. Becher picked up his phone, dialed and waited. "Bremer, this is Becher. Can you take me now?"

The barber shop was in the building lobby. It was a single chair affair that Bremer only opened up from ten until three. Becher had quarreled with him for years, that it was no way to run a business, but Bremer had a Buick and a split level and a son in college in spite of the attorney's advice.

Becher climbed into the chair and the barber started to fasten the cloth around his neck. "But you were just in here last week," he said, dropping the tapes. "No wonder I thought you sounded funny on the phone. It's another week yet before you need a trim."

"Don't look a gift horse in the mouth," Becher said. "Find something and cut. You went to barber school."

Bremer pursed his lips and did as he was told.

"Bremer," the lawyer said, "what do I do about a mouse?"

"That depends. Is it your mouse?" Bremer practiced mainly on attorneys.

"Who knows whose mouse it is? It's in my kitchen cabinet. Should I advertise in Lost and Found?"

Bremer waved the scissors over Becher's head, clicking them rapidly. "Then you want to get rid of it?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Then try a mouse trap. One snap and the mouse is gone." He snapped the scissors over Becher's ear.

"I see two problems. One, after the trap goes snap someone has to dispose of it. Two, right now the mouse is in a cabinet. If I open the door to put in a trap, I also let the mouse out. Who knows where he'll run to? Then what good is a trap?"

The barber considered. "As for point one, you can pick it up on a shovel or sweep it into a bag. It's not so bad. As for two, I don't know."

Becher waved the barber away. "What good is this? Let me out of this shroud."

Bremer untied the collar strings and pulled the cloth away and Becher jumped to the floor without waiting for him to lower the chair.

"If I think of anything I'll call you," Bremer said as the attorney slammed the door.

That afternoon Becher phoned an exterminator who recommended using a rodent bait. "It'll drive the mouse outside in search of water," he explained. But first Becher had to let the mouse out of the cabinet.

"He won't run far," the exterminator assured him. "If he has food in there he probably won't even leave the cabinet. Just open the door enough to set a few pieces of bait inside and leave the door open. I guarantee you'll never see him again."

The plan appealed to Becher. He could wear gloves and use long barbecue tongs to handle the bait and that would be that.

"If he has food why should he eat the bait?" Becher asked.

"Mice like it better. It's scientifically flavored to appeal."

On his way home that night he stopped at Safeway's and asked a stockboy to help him find the bait.

"Are you really sure you want to use this?" the stockboy asked.

"Why not?"

"For one thing it's poison. If a dog or kid gets into it, it could kill him."

Becher hesitated, box in hand. He had no dogs or children.

"For another thing the poison's pretty slow. It'll kill the mice all right but you don't know where they'll die. That could be a real problem, know what I mean?"

Becher knew. He put the box back on the shelf.

"Why don't you try traps instead?" the boy suggested. "They work every time—without problems, you know?"

Becher bought four traps. He had no idea how to work them. While he waited in the express line he studied the directions on the package, but he couldn't conceptualize the workings of the springs. Magda would be no help either, with her English. He decided to put the traps back on the shelf, but he'd waited ten minutes in the checkout line and now stood second from the register. He felt obliged to buy the traps. If he couldn't learn to work them, he could always give them away.

When he got home, Magda was waiting for him at the door.

"You're late. Dinner's drying up."

"I stopped for a minute at Safeway's. How is the mouse?"

"Come and hear."

He followed her into the kitchen. "I don't hear anything," he said.

"Wait." She tapped on the side of the cabinet and the mouse answered her, the noise of his movements strangely amplified by the steel cabinet.

"Has it been like that all day?" he asked.

"No. Sometimes he sleeps. What are we doing for him?"

"Let's eat first. It's been a hard day."

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She nodded and began to dish the food out onto serving plates.

"Magda," he said nervously, I just thought. If the mouse gets into one cabinet he can get into others."

"So?"

"The pots, the dishes, everything we use could be filthy."

She turned on him, armed with a ladle. "Filth you can see but not in my kitchen." She pushed a lid firmly onto a pot, closing the discussion. Nevertheless, the anxiety was on him. When she wasn't looking he polished his silver with the end of his tie.

After the meal Magda leaned back in her chair and folded her arms on her bosom. "Well?" she asked.

"Well what?"

"Well what about the mouse?"

"I bought some mousetraps."

"Good," she said. "How do you use them?"

"The directions are on the package." Behind them in the kitchen the mouse uttered a shrill squeak.

"Whatever it is you do to the traps, do it now," Magda said. "I don't want to hear that anymore."

Becher, under pressure, opened the package and began his struggle with the mechanism. The directions on the box referred to pieces of the trap's anatomy which he could not identify. In addition he needed a piece of fresh cheddar cheese, but the mouse was shrieking regularly now and Magda refused to enter the kitchen.

"Help yourself," she said. "Take all you want of the cheese but don't ask me into the kitchen until the mouse is gone."

Becher was a stranger in his own kitchen. He found the cheese but not the knife to cut it with. Finally he took the cheese to the dining room and used the butter knife to open the plastic wrapper and cut off a slice. Attaching the cheese to the bait hook was easy enough but then he had to draw back the spring and hold both trap and spring with one hand while he connected the trigger to the hook with the other. The first time he did it the spring snapped shut on his thumb.

"Damn," he cried.

"Did it catch already?" Magda called from the living room.

"No. Leave me alone."

The mouse was quiet now and Magda, fascinated by the procedure, came to the kitchen doorway to watch. Her presence flustered him and made the operation all the more trying. After a series of false starts he finally mastered the technique. Holding the trap carefully by its edges he crossed the kitchen and set it on the floor beside the cabinet. Magda watched him breathlessly, as though he were transporting nitroglycerine in a drinking glass.

"Now," he said, rising from the floor.

She bent over it cautiously. "How does that little thing catch?"

"The mouse nibbles the cheese," he explained, exulting in his hard-won knowledge, "and as soon as he touches it, it triggers the spring to snap shut on him."

"But how?" she waved her hand over the trap. He could see what was coming.

"We open the cabinet an inch and wait til he's caught."

"But the mouse will get out of the cabinet!"

"That's right," Becher said defensively.

"He'll be out, running around in my kitchen."

"Yes. But he'll go to the trap and try to eat the cheese and then snap, it's all over."

"But what if he doesn't want the cheese?"

"Mice love cheese."

"Humph," she said militantly, crossing her arms.

"Magda, it's the only way."

"Not in my kitchen we don't let him loose."

"Magda," he pleaded, but it was in vain. She took up her position beside the cabinet, glaring at him, ready to hold the cabinet door shut if he should rashly try to move the table away. A beaten man, Becher threw up his hands and left the field.

That night the mouse was quieter than before, but Becher still heard him, gnawing on peanut shells, rattling them against the metal cabinet walls. The sounds excited his imagination and caused him to dream strange dreams. In one of them the people he had seen and spoken with that day addressed him again in conversations where their words dissolved and were transmuted into mouse-like squeals.

The next morning Becher bolted the house without breakfast, leaving his astonished wife behind him, coffeepot in hand.

"Don't come home until you have a plan for the mouse," she called after him as he fled.

But alas, Becher could think of nothing. The best minds in his profession offered him no advice but the obvious. "Becher," they said, "you've got to let the mouse out first before you catch him."

So he returned to Magda empty handed at the end of the day and she took him in and fed him, but he could tell she disapproved. Frost hung in the air around her, a palpable cloud.

"Well?" she said when they had finished dinner.

"Well?" he answered. "Well nothing. I have no new ideas."

"Then you can clean up and do the cooking from now on. I have shared my kitchen with a mouse enough."

It was a heavy sentence and it made Becher a desperate man. As he did the unfamiliar labor at the kitchen sink, the mouse began to make a series of scrambling, thumping noises that suggested an athlete hurling himself at the door. Becher's sympathy was such that he would have found it easy to remove the trap and release the mouse, even leave out a little bite of cheese, brother for brother, kind for kind. But there was Magda, watching from the doorway, reminding him to clean the stove top and take out the garbage before he considered himself done.

The next day was Saturday. The mouse's noise had not disturbed them in the night and in the morning the kitchen remained strangely quiet, but even so, Magda

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refused to cook and Becher had to make their breakfast. The coffee was weak and sour and he burned himself frying the eggs, but Magda scowled at him pitilessly. Washing up afterwards Becher cursed himself and the mouse and his fate and he wondered how many months a mouse could live on a pound of peanuts and a bag of onions.

It seemed that he no sooner finished cleaning up from breakfast than it was time to make their lunch. Domesticity exhausted him—he wondered how Magda had endured it all those years. In order to protect himself from another round of cooking he offered to take her out to dinner and a movie. In the back of his mind he also flirted with temptation—after he got her into the car he could go back to the house for something and while there release the mouse. In their absence it would either fall into the trap or run away for good. Surely it would have the good sense not to linger. But Magda watched him like a hawk when they were leaving and he didn't trust himself to try to carry out the plan.

When they came home from the movie Magda tiptoed to the darkened kitchen.

"He makes no noise tonight," she whispered.

"Good," he said. "Let's go to bed." He didn't want to think about the mouse.

Magda hung up her coat and followed him to the bedroom, her face dark, preoccupied with secret knowledge. Once or twice while they undressed he thought she was about to speak, but each time he put up his hand in a warning gesture to fend her off.

"Not tonight, Magda, please," he said. "Let's not talk about it now."

Nevertheless he lay awake for a long time that night, unaccustomed to the silence, until the faint queer noises of the radiator water flushing through the pipes brought comfort to him and lulled him to a dreamless sleep.

The next morning the cabinet was still quiet. Becher started to make breakfast but his wife waved him away from the stove.

"You've done enough," she said. "I'll cook. Go read the paper."

It seemed to him she cooked the meal more slowly than usual. When they finally sat down to eat it was midmorning. Though he was hungry he ate slowly, deliberately postponing what seemed to lie ahead. There were still no noises from the cabinet.

After breakfast Magda stacked the dishes in the sink.

"This I can finish later," she said and to his surprise she went to the bedroom and put on her flowered hat.

"Where are you going?" he asked.

"Out," she said. "There are some things I need to do."

"But what? It's Sunday."

"Perhaps I'll go to church."

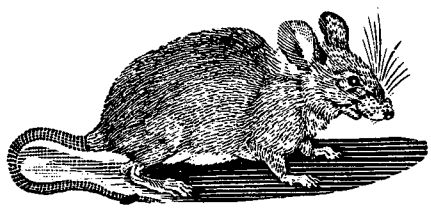
He was astonished. They were neither of them religious. She hadn't been inside a church in years. Before he could ask more questions she was at the door.

"I will be out an hour," she said, glancing at her watch. "That will be enough?"

He nodded, understanding her at last. The moment she was out the door panic seized him. He paced the length of the house once, twice, cursing himself for wasting precious time. Finally he went to the garage and found his gardening gloves and a trowel and, armed, gathered his courage together to face the mouse.

Carefully he moved the loaded mousetrap to one side. Next he pushed the table away from the cabinet and let the door pop open slightly. One part of him still half expected to see the mouse jump out and race for cover, but at the dark slit of the open door no mouse appeared. He drew a breath, approached the cabinet and pulled back the door as far as it would go. There on the shelf amid the scattered peanut hulls and the hard black pelleted feces, the mouse lay dead. Its small body was rigid to the tip of the tail, its gray coat lusterless and dry. The faint odor of decay wafted towards him from within the cabinet, mixed with the scent of rotting onions.

On his knees he studied the dead mouse, seeking in it some philosophy, but the frail corpse communicated nothing beyond its own mortality and insignificance. As he lifted the creature out of the cabinet on the trowel, tears sprang to his eyes and he was grateful that Magda had gone out and would not see his grief. □



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besmilr brigham

days after joshua

i

let me (escape from men

the unbare-able animal
he who made heaven thrown out on his haunches
head of dreams
/howling wolf in the darkness

for I have said
there is no heaven there is no hell
in my heart I know the absence of god

in all my flesh moves the presence of man

believing ape
surrounded by immaculate perception
body in a dry sea—love

look at the sky that he did not make but has
everything to do with
touch water that he drinks/the oceans pound with his heart
is there space of ground where his bones do not lie under

ii

I'll take the earth
the snake said)
what could be sweeter than flesh

entering flesh. the snake the sweetest dream
of rebellion! declaration that—
cry of the lizard's redemption
slammed the door on the garden mind
making the mind eating fruit all over the place

iii

lonely, one man cried to another
I ache he said to his mate
though a heart moves to a heart we
lick our wounds about the warmth we make

band of wolves that learned striking fire sit
raise our bodies to envy the moon

the Aztecs
knew it. as we know. as man

bound in the soul) knows: that winding
brain-coil union of spine and male
that makes us whole. whole to life;
and when that goes—we go.

the old ones fear. they squeench up
seed bags dried as tough fruit

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take heaven he said:
it was they that conceived
angels of the sun

on the vine
set to the core; the young in new
skin shiver before the snake

(not to find meaning in an old face dying

worn out beliefs washed up through blood
not the question who but what are we
a drowned world struggling after the flood
we look
into the spreading water
we did not see our own faces or god's face
we did not find the holy bird's wing
debris of material value
whatever we live for
it is beyond question that it is not worth it

the young sit hard in their places and without joy

even the devil has abandoned us)

iv

gone to his pit of fire
preferring his own angels—coming up
out of dim holes to dance at tribal
celebrations. dance because the heart is glad

dance for the dead that they stay so!
let us come up out of our pits of oblivion
I saw the devil frog
sticking his blanched head from a sewer drain
how he struggled against the boiling fumes of
water/water soaked his eye flesh
closed against the muscle surge
pushing back the porcelain cut-off
and he rose out and lay on the white shape

his haunches stayed red with bleeding
he sat for a long time after under the pepper plants

dance for joy
joy to bring devils back to the green earth
the heart singly
raise to pull the stubborn angels down

v

let the universe know
(heaven is with us
what futile dream
can make the individual aloneness

loading our time runners what has
my joy to do with time) it is pear-
branch green; and the white
bud flower that blooms to its depths
holds red deep under its petals. all
ran in another age
Joshua's
dying Jonah making his bed in a whale;
not to let the pharoahs tell us anymore
their death dreams. lie with love

as the sun, turn knowledge around!
let the earth be at peace. call down
the stupid sun and say: you are
all white, but your center is red

go around us again—revolve
don't be stopped. take the earth

(we are the angels

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THE TELEPHONE CALL

A STORY BY PETER CORODIMAS

1. *The Caller (whose voice is so throaty and low that some of his words are inaudible).* Puff. Puff. Puff. Do you hear me blowing into the phone? You bet your ass you do. Puff. Puff. Puf. Pu. P. Can you hear me I said? You sound young, tender, as they say—how old . . . you? In that case . . . pffst. Put your ear very very close to the receiver, puff, puff. Are you certain you can . . . me? Tell me what you look like. What does your mother . . . like, assuming you have a moth . . . , puff. Also, who is your favorite movie star? Your favorite cereal? Weird, you say. I'll show you something weird. I've got your weird. Hear that sound in the background? Listen. Puff. Pu . . . . Tell me what you heard. What? That's horrible —you don't mean that. If I ever get my . . . on you I'll beat you until your body is black and blue. Puff. And then I'll take your . . . and break it in two. You listening? There's a saying that the . . . they are the quicker they fall. You follow me? Don't play stupid, you know what I mean. Puff. Puff. Puff. I have dandruff, plenty of it, in my eyebrows. Don't tell me the meaning of that escapes you—there are certain meanings no girl in high school can escape. Puff. Pffst. Pffst. If I had you in front of me here on this wall-to-wall carpeting . . . , puff, puff. Wait a minute! Before you hang up growl into the phone. You heard what I said. You know. You know what I'm talking about. Come on, puff, puff, puff, puff, puff, puff, puff, puff, puff, puff, GROWL, GODDAMNIT.

2. *The Injured Party.* You must be very weird. Do you figure on calling again?

3. *The Mother.* Who is that on the phone, dear?

4. *The Injured Party.* Some weirdo.

5. *The Mother.* Hang up.

II.

1. *The State Trooper (to the Injured Party).* Don't worry about this and don't let it shake your faith in people. I've investigated so many cases like this I could do a book. And, remember now, if anybody calls and talks filthy like that to you again, hang up the phone. Understand?

2. *The Injured Party.* Okay.

3. *The State Trooper.* By the way, why didn't you hang up on him sooner?

4. *The Injured Party.* Because he sounded so weird I couldn't help myself.

5. *The State Trooper.* I understand.

6. *The State Trooper (to himself).* This kid is definitely a wrong number, any way you dial it.

7. *The Father.* If you catch that bastard pervert I'd like ten minutes alone with him.

8. *The State Trooper.* Whoa now!

9. *The Mother.* Harold!

10. *The State Trooper.* Let us handle this, this is our business. We don't just hang around radar traps giving out speeding tickets. Now: we could begin by putting a device on the telephone which would tell us as soon as the phone started ringing what number it was coming from. But we don't have too many of the devices and like to use them sparingly. I suggest we wait and see if he calls again. Chances are, he won't. Sometimes these calls are just shots in the dark, so to speak. Sometimes they're not. Usually we don't label them as serious until they start occurring with some frequency. Hopefully, two or three a week.

11. *The Mother.* That often?

12. *The State Trooper.* Correct ma'am. I had one case which involved a Negro. He was calling some white woman exactly three times a day, like clockwork. You may have read about this in the newspaper two years ago. All these calls were placed at the same time intervals, more or less. By god, I've got tapes of most of them—and two memo books filled with all the details surrounding the case. The creep's habits, what he said, the numbers he called from, and much more. He used assorted phone booths all around the city, which made it extremely difficult for a considerable period of time. But you wouldn't believe how bad this jerk was. You wouldn't be able to dream up the things he said, which is all on the tapes. Even I who am in the business couldn't believe it at first. If I ever do that book I mentioned I'll probably call it *The Problem of Belief* or maybe, *Seeing Is Believing.* Anyway, I became so intrigued with the case that, after the injured party agreed to go along with the calls until

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we caught the guy, I began to work on it during my off-duty hours. Which was bad. Almost lost my wife, in fact, she got so darned mad at me. Well, I had suspects, one of which was the woman's husband, believe it or not. Who else would know her habits right down to the last, uh, who else would know her habits so well? I finally narrowed it down to this black guy who worked at the same place she did, a box factory.

13. *The Father.* And then you nailed him.

14. *The State Trooper.* No. I followed him around for a while. To make a long story short, I finally caught him, after a three-hour stake-out, red-handed in a telephone booth over on the west side of town. I snuck up on him and in fact got close enough to hear a good part of the conversation. I say 'good', but you know what I mean. You would not believe the obscenities that spoofed out of this guy's poor excuse for a mouth. Okay, sewer-mouth, I said, that's it, this masquerade ends here and now in this telephone booth: it's time to leave the poor girl alone. He didn't offer any resistance, although I kind of hoped he would. He tried to tell me that that was his girlfriend on the other end of the phone, so I said, and you were talking to her in a filthy manner such as that? and he said she dug that kind of talk. We had him cold.

15. *The Father.* Any chance this one is black?

16. *The State Trooper.* I'm afraid I have no recent statistics on that.

17. *The Father.* I would really like to know what in Christ we did to deserve this. We deserve a hell of a lot better than this.

18. *The State Trooper.* This sort of thing can strike any home. You can't blame yourself.

III.

1. *The Father (to himself).* It will as the poets say be all one a hundred years from now. I truly believe this. But I who am the father of this girl deserve a hell of a lot better than this, not to mention my wife and daughter who keep their noses clean and deserve better than this. I who have wiped this girl's behind with loving care from age two weeks to age six and have watched her with wary eye wend her way into womanhood or something very close to it merit a better fate for all my work. All my worry. Is there no compensation for years of concern? For constant vigilance. Soulhurt. A voice on the phone, simple impulses along a wire—how harmless that sounds. Of course, more than just a voice. A voice is neutral, sexless, and immune to erections. That was a physical male on the line and like a dog in heat or like a snake who suddenly jumps out of the grass he exposed himself verbally to my girl while visions of pubic hair danced in his demented brain. How can you measure soulhurt? Where does the hurt end, the healing begin? And what about the future? Perverts pass the word around: years of possible perversion. WE MAY HAVE TO RELOCATE. And it could be anybody, even a relative or a friend or someone I work with. It could be

a. George Reed
b. Roy Brockmann
c. Sam Ippolito
d. Lester Pollock
e. Donald Quayle
f. Ed Nowack
g. Fritz Brodzinski
h. Morris Westlake
i. Bob Ternan
j. Jim Morgan
k. Johnny Keil
l. Ed Ballard
m. Pete Muir
n. Jim Goucher
o. Tom Broekhuizen
p. Roger Riley
q. Henry Keefer
r. Bill Keasling
s. Ernie Abare
t. Bob Travis
u. Al Mousso
v. Jack Lynch
w. Marty Williams
x. Angie Calimeri
y. Fred Lochner

or: z. Bob Perrault

Give me his identity and an axe, sweet Jesus, and I will chop his pathetic balls into pieces so tiny that even the grackles will search in vain for them.

IV.

1. *The Injured Party.* I don't know why you're all making such a fuss over this—actually I've heard weirder stuff at school.

2. *The Mother.* You don't really mean that, dear. You love to exaggerate.

3. *The Injured Party.* No, I mean it.

4. *The Father.* That's a lie. Get your little ass off to bed.

5. *The State Trooper.* Well, easy now. Things can be pretty rough at some of those schools. I've conducted an investigation or two that would strain your faith. You should hear some of those kids.

V.

1. *The Injured Party (in tears, running her little ass off to her bedroom).* I'm the injured party. Whose damn weird telephone call is this, anyway? □

PETER CORODIMAS is on the English staff at SUNY-Plattsburgh. His fiction has appeared in Prairie Schooner *and* Massachusetts Review, *and he edited* In Trout Country, *published in 1971 by Little, Brown.*

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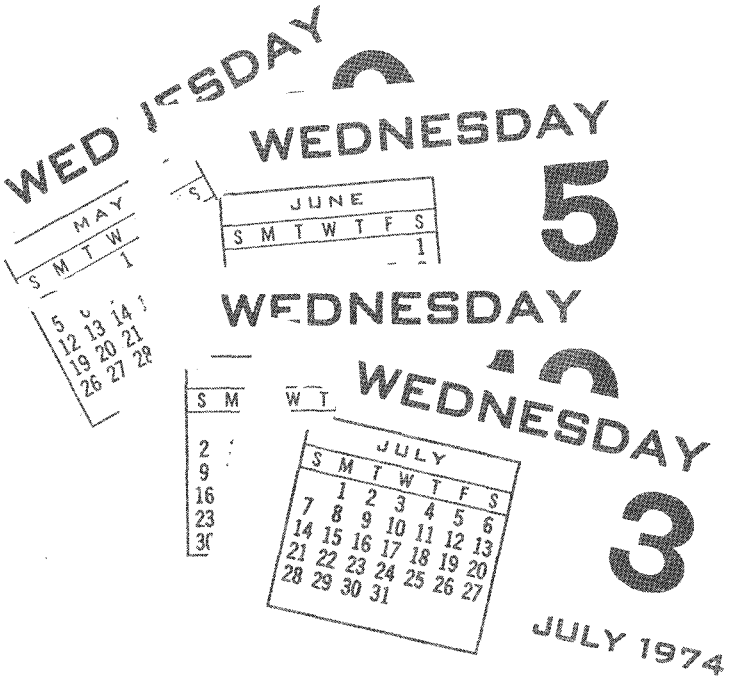
Wednesday



A Story by Jeanette Bertles

It is Wednesday.

I go to an analyst.

She smiles Germanically.

"My wife has this beige coat," I say. "She has beige skin and beige hair. She has a beige mind and a beige soul. There is something about my wife—but I don't know what it is—that makes me want to cry."

"So?" says the analyst.

"My office has no windows," I say. "It has indirect lighting. It has a thick carpet. It is decorated in neutral tones which are quiet and soothing and conducive to maximum efficiency. There is something about my office—but I don't know what it is—that makes me want to cry."

"Now tell me about you," says the analyst.

"I am a very private person—" I begin.

"Stop!" she cries. "This horrible tragedy is one hundred percent the fault of your father and mother! But we must not blame them! We must understand them! Fathers and mothers! Mother and father!" The analyst begins to howl and tears pour down her face. "And come back next Wednesday," she howls.

It is Wednesday.

I go to my analyst.

We fold our hands and kneel beside the couch. "Help me, Father," she prays. "Help me to cure this man who was surely born a sinner in Your eyes. Amen."

"Did that come free with the treatment?" I ask.

"That WAS the treatment," she says. "Now let us play a game. I will start a sentence for you, and you will finish it with whatever comes into your mind. 'I am a very private person because—' "

"Hold it right there," I say. "Count me out. Nothing doing. Not me."

"If you did not read the newspapers," she says, "you would not have these problems. No one should read the newspapers. Newspapers give one constipation."

"I won't play," I say. "No way. Forget it."

JEANNETTE BERTLES writes that two of her stories were accepted in the same week—this one and another at The Transatlantic Review. *One of them is her first published story.*

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Wednesday

It is Wednesday.

I go to the movies.

I sit in the dark and watch a naked young man making do with three naked young girls, a fast sports car, and an overpowering ennui. The girls are pink, the sports car is orange, and the ennui is beige. I laugh and laugh. I cannot stop. I am thrown out by the manager.

I bang on the cashier's window in protest. "Today is Wednesday!" I cry. "I need to see this movie! I have paid two dollars and fifty cents to see this movie! Everybody is entitled to his own escapism!"

"Act your age," says the cashier.

"I am, oh boy I am!" I cry.

The manager comes out and puts his arm around me. "Listen," he says, "hippies we allow to laugh—that's their thing. But you are a middle-aged, middle-class, middle-American male. You got to uphold the standards. You want to come in and masturbate nice and quiet, okay; but laughter and other public forms of rocking the boat is out. Get it?"

It is Wednesday.

I go to my analyst.

"I have to talk to you," I say.

"Let us try the game again," she says. "'I will not play this game with my analyst because—'"

"We have already tried five maybe ten times," I say. "Look, I cannot come to you any more."

"You have been reading the papers again," she says.

"Magazines," I say. "It is my duty to give you up and save eight Apache Indian children a month instead."

She throws up her hands. "I do not understand Americans," she says. "In Europe it is not a sin to be poor. In Europe everybody is poor. Why do you want to save the poor? Do you not respect them? Do you look down on them? By the way how are the kiddies?"

"What kiddies?"

"Yours."

"Possibly they sleep a lot," I say.

It is Wednesday.

I am with my wife in a large lavender hotel in Puerto Rico. The sky is very blue.

"Ravish me," she says.

"I beg your pardon," I say, "but I do not ravish on Wednesdays. Wednesdays belong to my analyst. I am too troubled, on Wednesdays, to do anything as normal as ravish."

It is Wednesday.

It has been Wednesday all week long.

But now it is really Wednesday.

I go to her.

"You are a rainbow," I say. "You are all gold and rose and shimmering. Your waist is incredibly small. You are a milkmaid. I wait below the hedgerow. The grass is green and joy is everywhere and now I understand my problem."

My analyst's eyes are closed. Her lips tremble. "Mama! Papa!" she calls, "your little liebling has come home!"

"I want to thank you for a beautiful week," I say.

"The mountain air is clear," she croons, rocking herself. "The little streams are clear. The cattle are standing like statues."

"Funny," I say, "when I first saw you—what with that grey hair and those dowdy clothes and that ample bosom—funny, you reminded me of my mother."

My analyst is singing:

"Du, Du liegst mir im Herzen,
Du, Du liegst mir im Sinn."

"Goodbye," I say, "I am leaving my beige wife and my sleeping kiddies. I am going where life is red and blue and green and yellow and real. You and you alone have made this possible."

"Du, Du machst mir viel schmerzen," my analyst sings, *"Weisst nicht wie gut ich Dir bin."*

It is morning. I am in my bed. I can hear the soft sounds of the sea. When I open my eyes the sky will be blue. The sky is always blue here, the bougainvillea is always red, and the hibiscus is sometimes red and sometimes yellow. When I go outside an iridescent green hummingbird will hang suspended in the air before a red hibiscus. He will dart at the flower, puncture it, and dart away.

The sea beyond the reef will be dark blue, and above the reef it will be turquoise. Close to the shore, its color all sucked out, the sea will be pale green. I would like to go to the beach today. But I had better not. Something is wrong with the sand—and I don't know what it is.

I wonder what today could be.

I wonder if it could be Wednesday.

It is Wednesday.

I go to my analyst.

She looks like an aged whore.

"Long time no see," she says.

"Very American," I say. "My wife has a new coat—red."

"Lovely," she says.

"My boss has put a new carpet in my office—red."

"Lovely," she says.

"I see you have dyed your hair—red also."

"A little error in perspective," she says.

"Never mind," I say, "you are a damn good analyst. Do you know what color sand is?"

"Beige of course," she says. "Shall we play a game?"

"All right. Okay. Shall we?" I say. □

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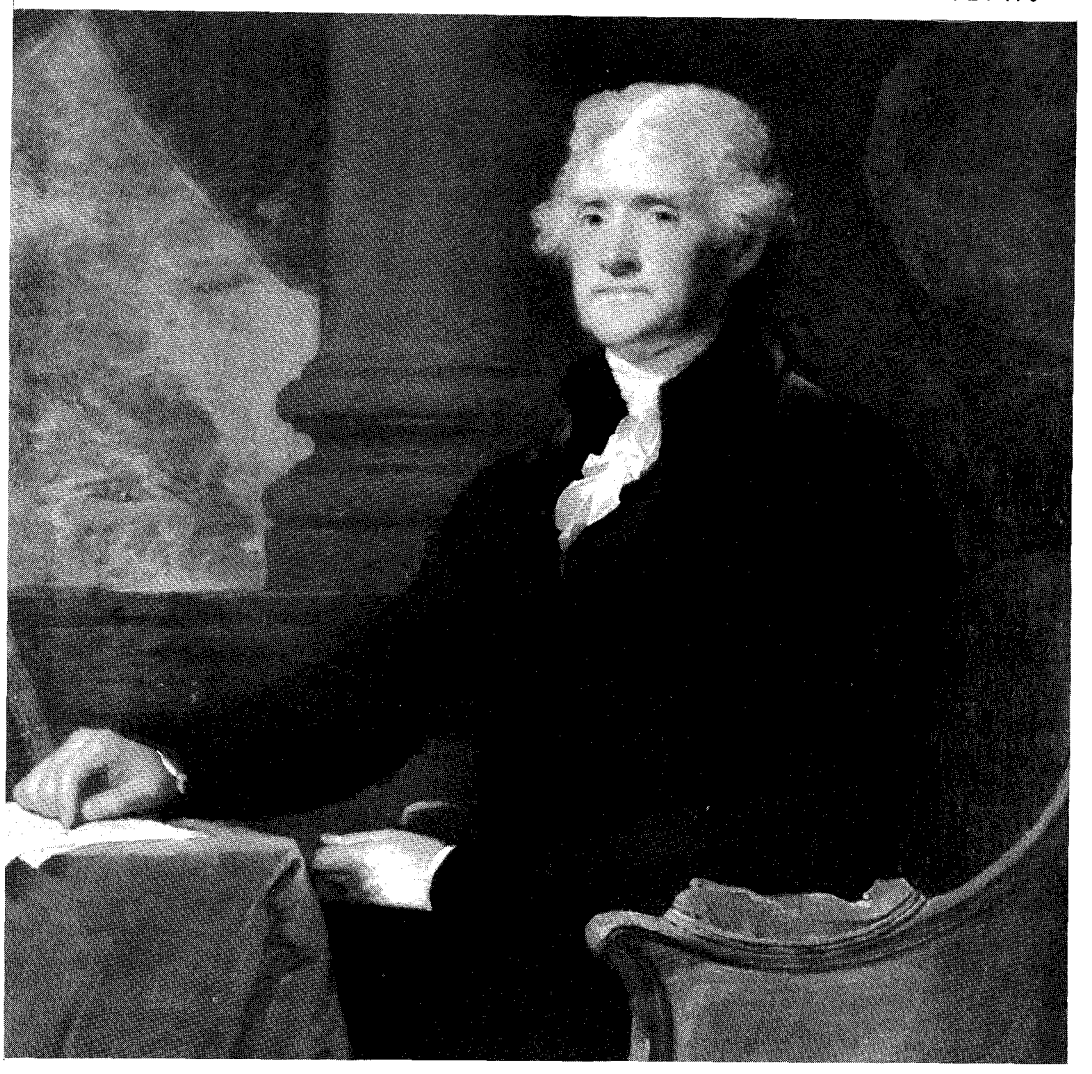
What Sort of Man Reads The North American Review?



Sir Monticello Mar. 27. 25.

I am a subscriber to the N. American review and understand you are agent for that work in Richmond. it will be more convenient for me to have it furnished from that place because payment there is easier made. I shall be glad therefore to receive it from you and this letter presented to Col. Bernard Peyton of Richmond my correspondt will ensure your receiving payment from him on my account, once a year or oftener if you chuse. I have received No. 46. but not Nos. 44. and 45. which I shall be glad therefore now to receive. accept the assurance of my respect.

Th: J

Since 1815, no magazine in America has had a readership more distinguished or a literary history more rich than THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW. Now available at newsstands, as well as by subscription.

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Hiding Out

A Story by Jane Ciabattari

After I escaped from my husband I found this place on a street with no name. Luigi the landlord calls it his street. He plays village headman, doling out advice and anisette from his kitchen with shrewdness and devotion. Luigi was suspicious at first when I showed up in the middle of a snowy night with the baby and two suitcases, but when I pulled out the money he veiled his eyes and chucked the baby under the chin, asked his wife to loan us blankets and helped me get the heat going.

Luigi's place is a renovated whorehouse, cut into twelve distorted apartments. Mine has two bedrooms with high-riding beds and no partition between them; a narrow aisled living room lined with chairs like a dentist's waiting room; a tiny kitchen with a formica-topped dinette set, electric stove and Frigidaire. The house is bordered on one side by a neo-colonial motel, on the other by a frozen lake dotted with glassed-in summer cabins, all deserted now. It's the coldest spot for miles. Across the narrow street is a drive-in movie, closed for the winter. The wind howls across the bare plain, rattles against the deteriorating movie screen, then whips around the corner of this old house.

I measure my state of mind against that eerie screaming wind. Ta-dum, ta-dum, ta-dum, whoosh. Baby crying, fix bottle, mash banana, ta-dum, ta-dum, ta-dum, whoosh.

The first morning here I went out and scooped up a bowl of snow, brought it inside and ate it with sugar and evaporated milk for breakfast. It slid coolly over my shrieking nerves. The baby crowed and laughed in an improvised high chair and I poured a little on his morning cereal. We laughed together and I let myself relax a bit. I had escaped. Laid the plans, all alone, hidden away the things we'd need one by one in my lingerie drawers, prepared one last complicated Christmas dinner for the in-laws topped off with sherry and dainty cookies—six varieties, all his family's recipes—before the fireplace. Sid's mother had smiled at me over her second sherry, and as she left with his father she took me aside: "My dear, you haven't looked so well in months. You seem to be doing so much better." Mistaking my hysteria for good humor, my sparkling eyes for good will, missing the core of my mood. And all the while I was thinking, this will be the last goddamn Christmas dinner they'll get out of me, the very last, and laughing inside.

Most of the people around here work in a reconstructed colonial village across the highway and down; they wear long linsey-woolseyskirts and six-button trousers and work at obsolete crafts: making pewter, blacksmithing, tinsmithing, spinning thread, weaving by hand, baking beans in brick ovens or stirring stews over the fire in two hundred-year-old houses. I call them the colonials. They move back into the twentieth century gingerly each night, slipping back like shades of the past, and quietly await the next morning. Some of them have lived this way thirty years or more; they know little of the outside world.

It's a hiding out, deserted place—no mail delivery, no sidewalks, no garbage collection or maintenance; you can't even see the house from the highway. Rumor has it the man in the apartment next to mine is hiding from the C.I.A. He sits behind closed venetian blinds with a loaded rifle. Sometimes I hear him pacing, or his door slam in the middle of the night, but I've never seen him.

Yesterday with a light snow the fear was weaker, and I thought we might be safe, but at dawn my husband broke in the door while I was sleeping (I always sleep on my stomach, even when I was pregnant) and took a butcher knife to my back, slicing all the way down my spine neatly, exposing the layers of pearly pink and white vertebrae, and hauled me out into the snow, trailing red across the frozen lake. All morning my nerves kept me from sleeping off the memory.

And later, drawing a bath for the baby, a gush of dark reddish brown from the faucet erupted like old blood

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JANE CIABATTARI is a native Kansan who has followed her fortune and family to New York, Montana, and—presently—San Francisco, where she works for the Sunday magazine of the Examiner *and* Chronicle. *This is her first published fiction.*

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and stained the water. Even forewarned by Luigi, I was startled, disgusted.

But I feel free inside this place. There's a radio, my coffee mug from home, the baby, deadly quiet. He can't find me here. Last night the cards foretold sudden misfortune, calamity, quarrels but happiness in the future (the snake and lightning striking) and a warning: someone is going to steal something from you and you will never get it back. But I am immune to all that. I have brought my own misfortune upon myself. I know it well.

One night the first week walking with the baby I took a wrong turn after leaving the post office and wandered into a sprawl of drunken retching youths, covering the forest floor and leaning toward me with gaping jaws and foul breath. I was nearly too frightened to move, but finally, clutching the baby to me, I waded through the bodies, all in utter silence with racing heart. I reached a darkened church and entered, climbing winding stairs into a tower. A sudden draught of organ music startled me and I looked down upon a Mass. A random thought crossed my mind: Looks like Pauline to me, wouldn't that be funny. But how was I to get out? I stood undecided, still cradling the baby, then I knew: Run down the steps and genuflect at each altar I see. Did I remember how? My life could depend on it. I practiced, and it came back, awkwardly. Would they be able to tell the difference?

Racing, all I remember is wine velvet and dark shapes and candles and forgetting to cross myself at the second to the last altar because I was so excited to see the entrance door and then being overcome with sickening fear that I would be exposed at the last moment, but they were all inclined in another direction, intent upon the pulpit, and didn't see me. Outside the door near a trellis trailing icy thorns I stopped to catch my breath, then rushed down the road, slipping on the ice. I passed a sign reading *Paulist order* and thought, Aha, I was right. Several blocks later we were locked into the warmth of Luigi's again, huddled together under the blankets in my oversized bed. Now I'm careful where I go, and by what route.

I shop for food at a supermarket in a neighboring town. It's called the Big Bunny. I wrap us up in heavy coats, mufflers, boots, even furry red ear muffs, before we venture out. When we drive past the giant bunny holding the week's specials—CARR TS, 2 BCHS 39¢, CHUCK STEAK $1.19 LB.—between its gaudy paws, I choke with laughter. Furry big bunny, I point out to the baby and he laughs with delight. His laughter is young, pealing; mine hurts my ears like the icy air. There's an edge to my voice which brings back our worst fights.

Today it is warmer—close to twenty degrees, the radio says—so I finally take the baby out to walk on the lake. Or around the lake. I am frightened to walk on it at first. I can't believe it can hold my weight. And I feel so responsible for the baby. THIN ICE: MOTHER AND CHILD DROWN. It would be my fault.

But then I notice Luigi has a bonfire going right in the center of the lake, and men are standing quite safely around it. A lake freezes at the edges first, where it is shallow, and the center, the core, is the last to give in to the cold. I calculate potential depth, days of sub-freezing temperatures, the heat of the bonfire, and convince myself it must be frozen solid.

So we step off the shore and onto the lake itself. I hold my breath at first, not trusting. But it supports me, and I let the baby toddle after. My boots make a peculiar rasping sound. I want it to be beautiful—the snow, bare trees, and people bundled up in red and blue. I show the baby the tiny bird tracks in the snow and he coos and chuckles, but I am too cold to enjoy it. My feet feel like blocks of ice; I'm grounded in utter chill, and my hands are stiff and painful.

I talk to the baby in a low, soothing voice, proud of myself that the fear doesn't leak through. It's like a recording, a calm, rational voice. I tell him how water freezes into ice in the winter, how in the summertime the lake must be lovely; if we stay until then we can picnic by the side of the lake but we won't be able to walk onto it. He doen't understand much, but *water* is one of his words, and he seems to like the talking better than silence. I try, but I can't imagine the lake in warm weather. I can't visualize spring or summer here. It seems cold forever, the cold is so overwhelming. And I can't imagine myself in six months. Where I will be, what I will be doing. I can't stay here forever, frozen in time, but it's the only place I feel safe now.

I tell the baby about ice skating. That when he's older he might learn how. Then I realize that's absurd, we won't be here when he's old enough to ice skate. Surely we won't. I tell him how my mother used to make us cocoa and peanut butter crackers in the winter and then I flinch at how normal that was, growing up in a family with brothers and sisters and having a mother at home when you came from school, a soft mother waiting with peanut butter crackers and cocoa. And he won't have that. Surely by what I've done I've denied him that normalcy.

But he's oblivious, scraping up snow with his mittened hands, a little square padded creature trailing footprints across a frozen lake, red muffler around his face, falling down and laughing, struggling against the bulk of his leggings and parka to get back on his feet. For some reason he seems far away from me, like he isn't mine. I feel responsible for him, and guilty, and that he's beautiful and charming, but he has nothing to do with me, really. And I don't remember when that started, that distance. But I take good care of him. I swing him around in the air to make him giggle, and take him back inside because his mittens and seat are wet, and strip him down and give him a hot bath because I know it will feel good, and feed him cocoa and peanut butter crackers and put him down for a nap under several blankets and kiss him sweetly on his chubby cheeks. But I'm somewhere else while I do it. It isn't the same.

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Hiding Out

I have a phantom lover who comes to me each night after the baby's asleep, creeping into my tall bed. He wears different faces and has a sure intimate knowledge of each inch of my body which is capable of pleasure. I call out his name in my sleep, but I can never remember it in the morning. I think of putting a pad and pencil by my bedside to write it down, like I used to write down my dreams, but decide I don't really want to know. And these days my sleep is too precious to interrupt.

The baby's been sick. He woke in the night screaming with pain, rubbing his ear with tiny knotted hands, burning me when I touched him. I called every doctor in town but not one would come here on a sub-zero night and I refused to drive a sick baby twenty miles to the nearest hospital in a car with a broken heater, so I accepted the last doctor's refusal, forcing myself to be civil, and took down his instructions for bringing down the fever: 104, 103, 102, a degree at a time. I coaxed the baby to take a tiny piece of aspirin in apple juice, then I took his feeble flushed body into the bathtub between my legs and sponged him with lukewarm water. I found myself sobbing, remembering his birth. And now he was limp like a stuffed doll, so frail. His eyes had withdrawn to another place; they were glazed, delirious. Finally he slept, still whimpering off and on, and I sat up the rest of the night smoking and drinking tea and wondering why we can never really feel another's pain, and crying for all of us alone. And feeling helpless.

That's my favorite word, right now. Helpless. Helpless to keep my baby from feeling pain, helpless to fix my life, or start a new life, to do the things I have to do. I don't have the sort of family I could go to and admit defeat finally and be soothed. No friends here. And I'm afraid to approach people—afraid that in the middle of a casual conversation a seam will split and inadvertently, uncontrollably, I'll spill out all my miseries in a rage that won't stop and they'll have me locked up. Afraid it will all show in my eyes, on my face—the crimes, the sick, self-indulgent excesses, the failures, the hidden weakness.

There are lines on my face I didn't have six months ago. In the mirror my eyes look bruised, demented. I smile at myself, testing for normalcy, but I can see it all behind my eyes, like maggots under a rock, all the ugliness and shame. He said I was sick—hysterical. Maybe I am. I'm a master of self-delusion. For ten years I told myself I had a good marriage. I would not allow myself to fail at anything.

I sit here at the table trying to remember. I know I am terrified, so afraid inside, but I can't really remember the horrid fights, the unforgiveable things we said to each other. They've been burned out of me. Too shocking? I don't have the courage to face them? I don't seem to have any control over my memory. Sometimes I try very hard—set the scene, what I was wearing, where he was standing, where we were going that day, what I fed the baby for breakfast. I can remember it all. But not the subject matter of our argument or the thrust of our words. Meaningless curses and threats going nowhere. I can see his back stiffening, and hear the tone of my voice, how shrill and out of control it was, but I can't remember what I meant. Or why.

I think if I could remember I wouldn't be so afraid, so helpless. It seems important to figure it out, so I can start something new for myself, face being alone, but as much as my mind races it just goes in circles and ends up at the same point. I have left and I am alone and I don't understand why it was so horrible but I couldn't bear being in the same house with him anymore and there must be something terribly wrong with me. Not necessarily in that order. And I hate myself for allowing it to go wrong, and I hate him for not trying to figure it out and fix it. I can't believe it couldn't be fixed, with effort. Why couldn't we fix it?

That's not fair. We could have, but I couldn't do it alone, and he blamed me for everything. I can feel it now, that urge to annihilate, that overwhelming hatred for him. I can remember the feeling, if not the context. He would say something, never mind what, the details are not important. To me it would mean, *you are worthless, you are ruining everything, there's something wrong with you and I am blameless, a victim of your vicious hysteria,* and I would see red. One time I picked up a chair and would have broken it over his head if he had not stepped aside, horrified. I remember feeling a great sense of release in that physical gesture. The strength in my arms as I lifted the chair, swung it over my head and toward him; the jarring thud as I brought it down on the floor hard. The fear in his face. My power. And the terrible—no, excruciating—guilt I felt when I realized what I had almost done. That I could have injured him badly, and the anger had been so powerful it had short-circuited my senses. I could not see the consequences of the action at the time; it was irrational. He said that. Irrational. Dangerous. Hysterical. And he said he didn't know if he could trust me with the baby when I got violent like that. He used every lever he could to dig it into me, his moral indignation. How could I stay with him?

But I didn't see that for years. So how can I know if I'm not deluding myself again now. I just can't figure it out.

It's snowing again. Maybe it will warm up. For days it has been so cold it could only spit ice crystals. I sit at the window watching the birds dip down to pick up crumbs around the garbage cans before they are encased in ice. And listen through the wall to Luigi's remedies for heartburn, frozen carburetors and rust in the pipes, and imagine his healthy eyes sparkling at the challenge of each new problem and narrowing in judgment of each new member of his court and hope we are safe. Any sudden car sound, bang on the wall or grotesque vision sends a jolt of panic through me. □

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ROBERT PHILLIPS

KING MIDAS

Because he had an absolute gift
for bitching up every occasion,

Because he grew up in a Bronx
-Renaissance brickabrack flat,

Because his mother always preached
to marry rich and he didn't,

Because his wife had a taste for gold
-lamé and rhinestone harlequin glasses,

Because the only taste he had
was in his mouth,

Greedy-guts Midas cried out
(when Bacchus granted him one wish),

"Make everything I touch turn to gold!"
You see how this would be problematic,

But Midas didn't. When the gold-
touch came, he was like a boy at Christmas.

He toyed with a leaf, and it became
goldleaf heavier than Cartier's best.

An apple magicked into a golden orb.
The house supports, pillars of gold.

The tackiest home in Forest Hills
had fewer gewgaws than he, all in a golden

Afternoon. What a talented fellow I am,
Midas gloated, feeling like Bernie Cornfeld.

And ordered his sweaty staff
to prepare a succulent celebration.

It was glitzier than Truman Capote's party.
Midas' mother and wife gussied up

Straight out of Cecil B. DeMille.
And such a fantastic floral centerpiece

You wouldn't believe. It looked like
Walt Disney had thrown up on it.

But the bread, when it came,
would not break, and the meat would not,

And the cheese would not, even the red
wine was gold: Wine and victuals every-

Where, and not a bite to eat. Midas threw
himself on the floor

And cried like a Miss America contest winner,
then raised his glittering fist to heaven

And begged for Bacchus to relieve him
Of his golden load.

(There's a moral here, if only you look.)
Bacchus sent him to the river—

At bottom he was fundamentally a Baptist—
and told him to rinse away his gilt.

He did, and that river runs yellow
yet. Midas now, in need of a hobby,

Runs Lionel trains. On and on through the palace
they race, while Mrs. Midas plays

Out her martydom. She twists a lonely
gold band on one finger of one hand.

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Leo J. Hertzel

KATZENJAMMER KIDS UP NORTH

"When you have reached your quota you are quite aware that you must go. There is a perfectly definite moment when you know you have seen enough . . . and must leave. If you want to know how definite it is, try and eat your way through a jug of soured molasses. To some people the feeling that you cannot go on will come at the first mouthful. Others are hardier. But there is a limit for all normal people."

—Ernest Hemingway
The Toronto Star Weekly
March 25, 1922

The Ryan Hotel in Grand Forks, North Dakota, has five floors. There is also a kind of basement which is reached by turning left at the registration desk and going down a flight of stairs. The restaurant of the hotel is in this basement and the restaurant is called "The Yankee Whaler Restaurant." Colored ship lights and lanterns hang from the ceiling. The waiters, mostly young men of college age, wear tight white sailor-type slacks and striped middie blouses a bit like the uniforms worn by attendants at the Barbados Holiday Inn. There are also some young girl attendants in The Yankee Whaler Restaurant. They wear very short mini-skirts and seem generally cautious. Thursday nights at the Yankee Whaler are Hawaiian Nights. As soon as a customer sits down at a table on Thursday night, a waiter comes carrying a bowl of fresh pineapple wedges. He places a wedge on a dish in front of the customer and says softly, "Alo-ha."

Stretching away to the north and south and west from the Ryan Hotel is all of the expanse of North Dakota, west three-hundred and thirty miles to the Montana border.

North Dakota has a state hymn, a state flag, a state coat of arms, a state bird, a state tree and a state fossil. The American elm (*Ulmus americana*) was named the official state tree March 10, 1947. Teredo petrified wood was named the official state fossil July 1, 1967. The first four lines of the state hymn are these:

North Dakota, North Dakota
With thy prairies wide and free
All thy sons and daughters love thee
Fairest state from sea to sea

Approximately three-hundred miles south and west of the Ryan Hotel is the town of Strasburg, North Dakota. Lawrence Welk was born in Strasburg. His home is a landmark visited by many tourists every year. The University of North Dakota is in Grand Forks. This year the university has an enrollment of 8,274 students, 58.7% of whom are male. Two students are between the ages of thirteen and fifteen.

For the past four years the English department at the university has sponsored a writers conference. "The De-

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partment sponsors an annual writers conference that has recently featured Southern Writers, Writers of the Northern Plains, American Indian Writers, and Women in the Arts," says the brochure. This year it will be "City Lights in North Dakota." Bring what's left of the beats to the northern plains. Bring in Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Michael McClure, Gary Snyder, Gregory Corso, Kenneth Rexroth, Peter Orlovsky, Allen Ginsberg along with the ghosts of Neal Cassady and Kerouac and Patchen. Put most of them up at the Ryan Hotel and have them eat in The Yankee Whaler Restaurant. Mix them up at the university. Tales of San Francisco in the good old days of the fifties. Is this possible? Orlovsky in North Dakota? Corso in the land of Lawrence Welk? Can the beats be warmed over out here in 1974 on these plains where the talk in the Ryan lobby and out on the streets and over at the *Herald* office is nearly always livestock, weather, and crops? In 1970 North Dakota ranked first in the United States in production of hard spring wheat, durum wheat, barley and flax seed. "Generally, I think 1974 is going to be a good year and the outlook for crops of all kinds is good," Myron Just, state commissioner of agriculture, is quoted on the front page of the *Herald*. "I don't think there's any price danger this year for wheat."

The first day of spring. There is snow on the ground in Grand Forks. There is snow in the air, blown about outside the Ryan Hotel by a wind that will not change. Winnipeg radio, 150 miles to the north, announces record low temperatures. There is no promise in the air; there is a restless, brooding, sullen feeling as if winter might never leave this time. But "City Lights in North Dakota" is in full swing. Out at the university in the art gallery on the second floor of the student union there is a Kenneth Patchen exhibit. "Halleluja Anyway!" Walls covered with Patchen's bright concrete poems, blobs of color, tortured word shapes beneath harsh white lights. To the right of the door, inside the gallery, a screen; behind the screen a tape recorder playing, endlessly, tapes of Patchen reading his poetry. Occasionally a ragged student wanders in the gallery and stares at a poem but mostly the gallery is empty except for a girl behind a desk selling pamphlets about Patchen and his work. At regular intervals the girl goes behind the screen and changes the tapes. No one is listening to the Patchen tapes. There is absolutely no audience. On and on, endlessly, Patchen's throaty voice comes out from behind the screen, changing key and pitch and tone and mimicking and scratching from poem to poem and no one is listening.

There is some ghastly dimension to all of this, some hideous joke as the mechanical voice from the grave goes on and on powerless to stop itself, totally ignored. Once in Louisville I went to an amusement park. In front of one booth was a mechanical barker with a taped carney come-on speech that came from a speaker hidden in his head. The speech ended in a hollow belly laugh. He stood in front of the booth repeating the speech and the laugh, over and over endlessly. But there weren't any people around because it was raining heavily and everyone else had gone home. But someone had forgotten to throw the switch to stop the mechanical barker so he went on performing in the rain, unable to stop. Patchen's voice was like that, an endless electronic chant from the grave like piped in music at cemeteries. I wanted to get out of there. I bought a book from the girl at the desk. There is a Patchen chronology on page 4: Item: "1957. Denounces all connections with the 'San Francisco Scene.'" The book includes reproductions of some Patchen works. "Sure is a Peculiar Way to Run a Ball Game" in color. Also includes introductory essay by Director of the University Art Gallery. The essay begins, "ART is created by artists."

Across a hall and around a corner is a ballroom. It is Wednesday night and Gary Snyder and Michael McClure will read. Ballroom is big, maybe six hundred chairs. The room is antiseptically white. I think I can still hear Patchen's voice coming down the hall, turning the corner, entering the ballroom, but surely not. There are too many people here, too much noise. The room is nearly full. I'm early, but there are few vacant chairs. I sit down. Someone hands me "Clean Newsletter Number One."

CLEAN NEWSLETTER NUMBER ONE

Dear Friend of North Dakota;

The land of our state is facing great peril. We have a large amount of the worlds deposits of coal, and many people want to use that coal to fuel the energy hungry cities of the east.

In order to get the coal they will strip the land in the south-western region of the state. Giant cranes will dig their claws into the earth and leave scars for years. Thousands of acres have already been leased to the coal companies for coal gasification purposes.

Many North Dakotans feel that the impact upon our state will be enormous and not favorable. Reclaiming the land to its original productive status is doubtful. The downgrading effects of gasification and strip mining on

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On the stage is a table with two chairs. On the table two thin sticks of incense, a pitcher, some glasses. A young man in jeans and jersey hurries onto the stage and lights the two sticks of incense. One stick burns enthusiastically during the following performance; the other stick dies immediately.

Late from The Yankee Whaler Restaurant, Snyder and McClure arrive. McClure sits behind the incense that will not burn. He wears a long scarf that circles his neck and falls full to the floor on both sides. The scarf somehow serves to draw attention to his face; it is a pretty face, boyish, a pretty-boy face whose smile communicates a great sense of self approval.

Gary Snyder is introduced to the audience as "Poet, Dharma-bum, Friend of the Earth." He reads for 22½ minutes, sometimes letting his poems become songs with his voice rising to sound a bit like Gordon Lightfoot. Snyder reads from *Turtle Island*, the true name of the North American continent, he says, the name given to the continent by its original people. His poems are mostly about mushrooms and Indians, people and things "of the land." It seems to me that this kind of literary ecology stance is hard to bring off. Indians and mushrooms are very big now, of course: students with head bands, hitchhikers across the land in fringed jackets, beads, *Soldier Blue*, Wounded Knee, Don Juan, Clean Newsletter Number One. On the literary scene all of these things turn towards a new romanticism; and nearly every poet wants to get a piece of the action. But it is not easy to meld City Lights and Turtle Island. William Everson has tried it, crouching about the stage, loping in a way he apparently thinks Indians lope, wearing fringed jackets with beads and carrying Indian-looking pouches. Who remembers that day Everson dramatically on the stage removed his religious garb to stand in front of the audience clothed as a full Indian! But Everson only comes through as a little boy with a toy bow and arrow and a little teepee in the back yard. Who can take this phony Indian loping by a grown man seriously? No, it is not easy to bring off this new mushroom-Indian romanticism, especially if you come from the San Francisco scene. But Gary Snyder is not Everson and Snyder has been following this trail for many years. He did not join the tribe yesterday. It is impossible not to like him as he stands easily reading and talking to us about non-society things. I am convinced; I believe he cares about Turtle Island. I believe he cares about the land and the Indian. It seems right for Snyder to be in North Dakota on the first day of spring singing mushrooms—wearing a red turtleneck sweater, jeans, and an old tweedy jacket, his hair tied back in a bun.

McClure recently wrote an article for *Rolling Stone* about Bob Dylan. "The Poet's Poet" McClure called the article. He describes going to a Dylan concert where when the band played "Like a Rolling Stone" the second night, he had to run into the hall. The night before, when he heard Dylan sing that song, McClure began weeping and he could not stand such a devastating experience a second time. I do not seem to be able to relate to that story very well. I am very fond of Dylan's music but I do not weep uncontrollably when he sings "Like a Rolling Stone" or anything else. I also find it difficult to relate to the idea of Dylan being "the poet's poet" at least in any usual interpretation of that phrase. Perhaps what I am saying is that I do not relate to McClure's prose nor could I relate to his stage presence and his poetry. He read a poem dedicated to Dylan. Then, joining the mushroom movement, a poem about a flower, a monkey. He read about a headache he once had. There was something too delicate about all of this. Outside the wind was blowing snow and I felt that if McClure walked out into the North Dakota night he would be swallowed up by the dark and maybe never seen again. His flowers were hot-house flowers, his monkeys caged. I remember Clyde Bellecourt standing in front of another Dakota audience, grim, the rugged face and the braided hair, talking about the trail of broken treaties, his people's land. He raised his arm, fist clenched, defiant, and said he was ready to die to get justice for his people. I do not think the Dakota night could swallow *him* up. He was neither delicate nor pretty, but he was real.

There are times when nameless forces work judgments that go beyond reason. Take your scarf and your headache and your pretty smile back to the Ryan Hotel, McClure. Go play some Dylan records and weep. Your

water and air quality are inevitable. We do not know enough about the effect of drawing water from underground supplies or the effects of a boom and bust economy on the area.

North Dakota is being asked to rush into decisions concerning coal development. This effort by out of state power interests can only work to the profit of the companies and the deterioration of the quality of life in North Dakota.

BUT WE ARE NOT READY TO GIVE UP . . . "Clean" is a new organization dedicated to stopping this mad rush into coal development. And here is what you can do to help. . . .

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incense has gone out. Your poems are limp as your smile. I walked out of the ballroom, down the hall. I could hear Patchen's voice rising and falling in the gallery.

Standing in front of the urinal in the men's room down the hall from the Dakota Room, I was trying to understand what I had been watching and listening to for the past hour or so. Tom McGrath came in carrying a little boy.

"You can't do anything up there," McGrath said. "It's hopeless. There's too much shit going on. Corso is ruining everything." He lit a cigarette.

"Maybe Corso is just putting on an act."

"I doubt it. But whatever he's doing, he's really screwing everything up. They're not going to get anything done this way."

We had just come from the Dakota Room, a session billed as "Open Mike." On the stage sitting in chairs, lined up like jurors, were (in this order)

Rexroth McClure Ginsberg Ferlinghetti Corso Orlovsky

Apparently whoever conceived of this arrangement had hoped that some kind of illuminating dialogue would result. The following things happened, more or less in this order:

Ginsberg removes his shoes.

Corso lights a cigarette and mugs for the audience. Apparently facial expressions and exaggerated gestures are to simulate tough East Side New York kid.

Ferlinghetti begins to talk about Hemingway. Hemingway copped out. Hemingway had no political awareness. He lived in Cuba while Batista raped Cuba and Hemingway did not protest. Everyone on stage appears to agree with the anti-Hemingway judgment.

Someone sees Tom McGrath in the audience. Everyone on stage begins yelling at him to join the panel. McGrath climbs on stage carrying a small boy. Sits at edge of stage near Rexroth smoking cigarette.

Rexroth begins to reminisce about origins of the beat movement. The beat poets were in Whitman tradition. Rexroth observes that Robert Lowell is a snob. Rexroth observes that Mary McCarthy is a snob. Relates unpleasant anecdote about how utterly snobbish Mary McCarthy can be. The conflict underlying this attack appears to be that Lowell and McCarthy look on populist poetry with contempt. Beats, apparently, consider themselves populist poets as well as ecological aesthetics. Some vague relationship here with earlier attack on Hemingway.

Peter Orlovsky takes off his shoes.

Rexroth appears tired, nearly falling asleep.

Corso suddenly lurches forward and accuses Rexroth of calling Corso a queer. Rexroth yells, "Shut up!" Corso continues yelling and accuses Rexroth of being a homosexual. McClure tries to quiet Corso but he continues yelling. McGrath tries to quiet Corso. Rexroth and McGrath agree that Corso is a cheap publicity seeker. Rexroth yells to Corso, "Leave me alone. I don't like you. Just shut up." Apparently satisfied with what he has accomplished, Corso suddenly quiets down, sits back in his chair and smiles.

Rexroth talks absently about the new ecology awareness and observes that William Everson is "one of the best poets of the San Francisco scene." Someone mentions Robinson Jeffers. What do you think of Robinson Jeffers? McClure says he doesn't respond to Jeffers. Too much technique. "I admire him, but I don't like him," McClure says. "It's like being the world's best cookie maker."

Ferlinghetti says maybe Kerouac was a more important figure than Hemingway. Kerouac wrote in the first person, influenced all the "new journalists." Changed the whole direction of contemporary writing. Kerouac did his journalistic thing, telling what really happened, not like Hemingway who wrote "fiction." "I hate fiction," Ferlinghetti says.

Questions from the audience: Who influenced you in your writing the most? Names are thrown about: Rilke, Pound, Whitman. Orlovsky seems confused by the question, "I haven't been reading much poetry lately. Been working on the farm, you know."

Rexroth recites a humorous haiku about having sex on the American flag. Corso mugs, suddenly breaks into a rambling speech packed with obscenities, "The American sickness is really cunt. . . ." No one in the audience seems particularly interested.

A break in the dialogue. Outside the Dakota Room, Orlovsky is talking excitedly with a group of ragged students. Orlovsky is wearing a T-shirt with statistics from the Viet Nam war stenciled in red on the front and back —numbers of dead, pounds of bombs dropped, cost of war, numbers of injured. It is the same T-shirt he has worn for the past two days. He is talking excitedly to the students about the "military-industrial complex," accusing the complex of killing civilians. Ginsberg is standing beside him; he asks the students if they've seen the public rest rooms with "If you voted for Nixon you can't shit in here" scrawled on the door. Wants to know if they know the joke.

Standing in front of the urinal of the men's room down the hall from the Dakota Room I was trying to understand what I had just been watching for the past hour or two. Most of it was just random conversation of course. But there was a sadness to it all, a grotesque sadness like the tapes of Kenneth Patchen. The Katzenjammer Kids at fifty trying to repeat the things they had done at eleven: taking off their shoes on stage, calling each other names, playing bad boys, wearing funny clothes. Here lined up on the stage were the giants of the San Francisco scene twenty years ago. But now the scene has changed and the time is different and what was daring and frightening and new then is very nearly childish now. Is this what the beats have come to? The beats who once seemed men searching for some kind of meaning in the morass of American post-war flatness, who sometimes said beat meant "beatific", now lined up on

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a stage like clowns in front of six hundred people in North Dakota, looking clown old and foolish, propping themselves on the ghosts of Kerouac and Cassady, while that never ending chant of Patchen goes on just down the hall. The desperation to stop time, the sadness for something forever gone—it seems almost cruel to bring these people here.

Tom McGrath came in. "You can't do anything up there," he said. "It's really hopeless. There's too much shit going on. That Corso is ruining everything." He lit a cigarette.

There are a lot of people here who think this whole San Francisco scene is one giant rip-off," the girl said. She was eating a tuna fish sandwich.

"I don't think it's exactly a rip-off. It's just one of the most grotesque things I've ever seen. McClure says he weeps when he hears Dylan sing "Like a Rolling Stone. Can you believe that? I feel like weeping when I see these men making clowns of themselves; I get that strange feeling of being embarrassed for them. I don't think I can stand hearing that Patchen voice again."

"Corso is going to read this afternoon," she said.

I am tired. I am discouraged beyond sadness. Does anyone believe things are accomplished by wearing funny T-shirts with death statistics stenciled on? Is political action telling shit jokes about Nixon? Would Hemingway have helped Cuba if he had told shit jokes about Batista? Is this what poets have to tell us? Have they come to North Dakota to convert us to wearing head beads?

Gregory Corso reads in the Dakota Room. He is introduced as a person who will give us a "poetry shock." Wearing a lavender shirt, he stands in front of a packed room; perhaps three hundred people have come to hear him. He sneers at the audience, mugs the bad boy routine.

"Here's a fuckin' haiku Kerouac laid on me."

"Wow! This fucker is a great poem!"

"In four days I'll be forty-four years old."

He reads very fast. It is difficult to understand the words. Where is the shock?

Thursday evening, the first day of spring, and Rexroth is seated in the Yankee Whaler Restaurant. "Alo-ha," says the waiter. Rexroth will read in an auditorium at 8:15.

The auditorium is completely filled, people sitting on the stage, people sitting in the aisles. Tom McGrath comes in and sits on stage, smoking one cigarette after another.

Rexroth arrives on time. Looks old, a tall old man with a paunch, a tired expression in the way he holds his body, white hair, a dark suit, a red vest. His white hair is duck-tailed in back.

Rexroth seems totally at ease. He begins to read from *New Poems*, his new book subtitled "Love is an art of time." From somewhere in the audience Corso begins yelling at Rexroth. Rexroth looks down in the direction of the interruption and says harshly, "Don't try to queer me. I'll have you thrown out of here." Corso yells back an insult. Rexroth raises his voice, nearly yells, "Nobody interrupted you when you were reading." No answer from Corso. This is the second time Corso has attacked and then suddenly, for no apparent reason, backed off. Are we watching a game here? The good wrestler and the bad wrestler?

Rexroth goes back to his reading. An old man reading passionate love poetry. *To a girl I loved once.* He reads a poem to a girl he once loved, but she has been dead a long time now. An old man reading passionate love poetry he has written recently, age and death reaching desperately for passion. He seems aware that there is something nearly pathetic in all of this. He apologizes for being a horny old man, compares himself to Yeats in his old age. Monkey glands. Then he goes on talking about his "girls". I am troubled. This seems not to be a mature man with wisdom seeing the contrast and the wonder — there is no "Sailing to Byzantium" here. This is an old man literally striving to be callow. He tells a story about once when he addressed an audience and he told the people he was going to discuss sex, revolution and mysticism and a girl in the audience yelled out, "What's the difference?" Maybe he didn't say that. I was thinking about Corso and his vulgarities, Rexroth's desperation to be young again, Orlovsky and his T-shirt, Ginsberg taking off his shoes, those terrible tapes of Patchen running, running, running. I could not explain to myself then nor can I completely explain now just why this all seemed to be full of terror and sadness. Maybe it was the Dakota plains that caused this feeling. I could see Bellecourt's raised fist.

Questions from the audience. "Mr. Rexroth, how many languages do you speak?"

Five, maybe six. English, French, Spanish, Chinese, Greek, some others.

Alo-ha.

I walk back to the parking lot. A flame twists and squirms inside a metal sphere on a pedestal outside the building that houses the English department offices. Clearly the people who arranged "City Lights in North Dakota" wanted to expose North Dakota to those names that have become legendary since the 1950s. Clearly this was an ambitious literary dream; it was not intended to be a rip-off. But that squirming flame couldn't escape the wind and spring showed no signs. From the baby face of McClure to the old man in there reading futilely to stay time there seems nothing but decay. I should not have come here. Why do they invoke the ghosts of Kerouac and Cassady and Patchen?

Tomorrow Ginsberg and Orlovsky are scheduled to read.

I go back to my room on the fifth floor of the Ryan hotel and turn on the radio. Winnipeg news: A church group in Toronto has filed suit to invalidate the marriage of two homosexual men in Winnipeg last week. □

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COLETTE INEZ

SCHOENBERG MOSAIC

Schoenberg, iceberg,
the odor of music resembles God
in its diffusion, a dog in its confusion.
Confusion say: Currier Ives for Charles.
New things don't soothe.

There's a future in your tomorrow
and old scales to play unless you change
your ear's address.
That iceberg is Goliath
after hearing David's lute. His ear was gross
and lost the points. The skua gull reports
what nuances he needs: plankton, snow,
the humming seals.

In stalags of the north
terns avoid what staves they can.
An odor of dogs resembles loss.
There's a past in the presence of your home
in a contract no one signed, Schoen Time
Koncert Krieg twelve tones ago.

Odors of snow when the agent is God
selling tundras to dogs of his alternate choice.
And the ice in choice adamant as tone, epitome
and other nouns in the Schoenberg rungs
of twelve toned climbs, Eine Kleine Nacht bergs
in God's white blood
soaking the darkness with snows of his love,
and la la's of stars.

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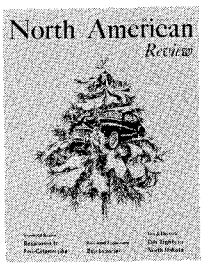

Jeffrey Klein

Politics and the Self-serving Imagination

Writers can not afford to flatter; politicians have to. Whether appealing to a ruling class, "the public", or streetpeople, a politician can not openly examine himself or criticize his supporters. Good writers, on the other hand, mock our current beliefs. If the conscious world is working perfectly, if a writer tells us something we already know, then there is little reason to read his books. And there will be no reason in the future. A writer must expose; yet as an obsessed outsider he also wants our approval.

This schism is particularly crucial with political literature. The writer's critique applies to himself. While attacking those in power, he exposes his own ambitions. While contesting a politician's place in history, a writer implies that he knew (and knows) better. At the same time, the writer's actions *are* his words. His voting record is his book. Inside we see the sexuality he has, desires, despises; the language he balances to conceal and betray; the intellectual and moral obsessions he makes of history; the love and power of understanding he offers but can never get enough of.

A great writer can let go within this contradiction. In a literary miracle, his personality fuses with the culture's; his political demands become our own and collectively myth. This is rare. Usually what we get is political journalism — often a story by and about a journalist because the author believes he has the facts. Here political posturing tries to distract our attention. Yet whether a radical exposing himself, a liberal objectively stating the case, or a conservative hiding behind an arrogated heritage, the author's personality still obstructs. Although we hear what he says, we feel manipulated. We sense he hasn't understood himself. Thus his shouts of enlightenment became a further pollution.

I would like to explore this phenomenon with three examples, best-sellers from high class authors and houses.

Aaron Burr was a Revolutionary War colonel, a Senator, a famous New York City lawyer. He reached his highest political office when he tied Jefferson for the presidency. Burr lost the election in the House of Representatives and settled for the second spot. He began his subsequent term by killing Alexander Hamilton in a duel and he ended it under indictment by Jefferson for treason.

Burr starts twenty-five years later in the 1830s. The old man has survived his fellow founding fathers and all charges against him, but now sees himself enshrined as the nation's Evil Ancestor. Gore Vidal's novel has two plots, past and present: Burr retells *his* version of history to Charlie Schuyler, a young journalist-lawyer he has taken under his wing. All the while we follow the continuing adventures of these two men. Sexual adventures as Burr remarries the richest ex-whore in New York and Schuyler falls in love with an adolescent prostitute. Political adventures as Burr secretly meets with the likely next President, Martin Van Buren; while Schuyler unravels their mysterious connection — is Van Buren Burr's illegitimate son? Everyone is paying Schuyler to find out (or anonymously slander Van Buren even if he doesn't find out), because the election is near and any connection with Burr will be the kiss of death.

Who are these men roaming through our history? Burr portrays them as just the opposite of what we commonly believe. Washington is a vain, slow-witted, military blunderer who politics for a strong government in order to advance himself and protect his own property. "How fitting that the first American president should have been a land surveyor." Hot-headed, egotistical Hamilton gets an easier treatment because (1) he never became president, (2) Burr killed him, (3) they were open rivals who could have been brothers. Of course, Burr tells us, there *were* differences. "He was envious, I am not." Burr reserves his greatest wrath for Jefferson, a ruthless hypocrite who systematically violates the civil liberties of everyone around him — he indicts an accusing newspaper editor, an independent Supreme Court justice, and finally Burr himself. All the while, under the banner of states' rights, Jefferson acquires tremendous territories and amasses a government more imperial than Bonaparte's. He was, Burr says, "either a fool in his zealotry or an active principle of evil."

This is great stuff. Vidal brings both the 1780s and

Burr, by Gore Vidal. Random House. $8.95.
Facing the Lions, by Tom Wicker. Viking. $7.95.
Blood Dues, by Dotson Rader. Knopf. $6.95.

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1830s to life. We watch Republican cabinet members battle Federalist cabinet members in the midst of a yellow fever plague. Fifty years later, when factions have split into parties, we see Whigs rioting against Tammany Hall. Meanwhile Burr's new wife sues for divorce (he has stolen her money), and Schuyler's young prostitute leaves him after a miscarriage. Back in her whorehouse she is bloodily murdered; a few months later Burr dies quietly. The now-cynical Schuyler gets a consulship for not selling out his patron — only to find out years later that *both* he and Van Buren were Burr's sons.

We leave this book as from a great dinner party: the gossip has been as good as the food. But the morning after something feels wrong. Was the creation of this or any nation a dinner party? Were Washington, Hamilton, and Jefferson merely self-serving? Self-serving yes, but *merely* that? Conversely, the women feel not quite right. Three major females have been whores — Burr's clever, rich, jovial wife; Schuyler's pure and innocent mistress; and the town Madame — a constant reader and perhaps the book's philosopher. Nobody is what he or she seems; our history has been all screwed up.

We are in debt to lonely Burr-Vidal, accurate in particulars, snappish to the last. Vidal is the one novelist today who feels patrician enough not to be intimidated by the founding fathers. He has consequently peopled his history with men and women as frail as you and me — welcome relief from the cardboard portraits staring down over our blackboards. But Vidal's greatest strength is also his greatest weakness. He has missed the men for their egos, the cultural forces for the men.

Although the government Washington eventually headed did protect his plantation, hundreds of other landowners were either Tories or idle during the Revolutionary War. Why did Washington so staunchly defend a United States from the first? Burr's satiric portrait merely inverts the usual idolatry. We lack the man here, with pressures upon him and contradictions within. Similarly Hamilton may have crusaded for strong Federal rule because he imagined himself king; probably Jefferson did champion civil and states' rights in order to obtain votes. But why was their conflict so particularly American that it has persisted into our day? Burr's dismissal illuminates nothing.

As Washington City is erected in a wilderness swamp, Burr provides no sense of human experiment or possibility. He is no hypocrite because he is without a vision to betray. We are pleased that he never becomes president. Amid all his deflationary sarcasm, he displays no concern for populace or country. No love for anyone save the unspeakable for his drowned daughter (which leads to his duel with Hamilton). In an aristocratic world, Vidal's Burr never questions his right to govern, even though he lacks any values or philosophy except the most tepid utilitarianism. Jefferson indicts Burr for trying to be Emperor of the western states. Burr's only defense is that he wanted to be Emperor of Mexico.

Thus Gore Vidal's radicalism feels to me retrograde. His wit offers little of himself. His attacks seem based on aesthetics rather than ethics; those in power are vulgar. Like Charlie Schuyler (his own creation), he yearns for a father in our noble past, a past he simultaneously realizes isn't noble. Like Burr he belongs to the ruling class but is without a supporting family. This push-and-pull embitters Vidal; he has no legitimate heirs because he has no love for the future. Instead he sorts through the country's heroes, exposing political and sexual duplicity. Men are fools, women noble whores. Alone and value-free, Vidal's star appears to rise.

Tom Wicker begins *Facing The Lions* with a quote from Teddy Roosevelt, which reads in part: "The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena — whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood . . . his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat."

Richmond P. Morgan, the novel's protagonist, is most definitely in the arena. Washington Bureau chief for a Big City newspaper (say the New York *Times*), Morgan curses his wasted afternoon in the White House sniffing out today's story: Who will be the new CIA head? Morgan works his fatigued way back to his office where he is respected (jokes with reporters, sleeps with secretaries) not just because he is boss. Morgan can hardly get it up for tomorrow's column. He doesn't care who the new CIA head will be because this is just surface news, "not the story itself." Phone calls come at him: he won't speak with Kathy Anderson, the Senator's wife; in a bitter ritual he tells his wife not to expect him home. At last before his typewriter Morgan's senses click — he guesses the CIA chief. The professional has once more scooped everyone. And the next moment his intuition whispers that Senator Anderson, his best friend, is dead.

Morgan and the Senator came to Washington from the same Southern state, "each alone but together in youth and hope and yearning." In *Facing the Lions*, Morgan returns home to bury his friend and for once uncover "the greater truth" of political life. Morgan met the golden Anderson when he first displayed "the gift of making people believe in him." Morgan was the Senator's confidant at the high point of his career when he chaired migrant labor hearings, exposed repulsive conditions, and even pinned ownership of one labor camp to his party's presidential candidate. With the race now wide open, Anderson decides to go for "the brass ring." "I've got to do it, I was born to do it." In the primaries this millionaire is the first to use spot television commercials, which advertise him as a "poor man's candidate running against the bosses." He overwhelmingly wins the voter's support only to clash at the convention with party regulars, who want to punish him for punishing one of their own. Anderson comes so close — a last minute bathroom conversation with the swing boss — but he falls even faster and further. He ends his career drunkenly snoozing in Congress as he eagerly awaits his death.

Morgan remembers all this in patches neatly organized between his flight down South (with lesser, envious

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"media" men), a subsequent fling with the stewardess (to "bury his hurt and grief and failure in what she offered him"), and more phone calls back to his wife who hints of *her* affairs. Key characters in Anderson's life collect along the way, touching off further memories as we draw deeper into Morgan's Dixie where "ugliness and haste, concrete and steel, plastic and neon, were overwhelming gentleness, largeness, the old sure sense of land and place." Finally at the funeral we meet the two people who know what happened that night at the convention. Kathy "Long Tanned Legs" Anderson and the soulless "green-lensed" boss who denied Anderson the crucial votes.

This novel is so congested with guilt and failure, melodrama and fat prose, that the reader feels he will die of a heart attack. We never find out what occurred that night at the convention because nothing did. The Senator was willing to sell out any principle he believed he had, but the boss wasn't even listening. After he loses the nomination, Anderson thus has nothing to fall back on. His wife turns against him because he is "soft, wishwashy. Just not good enough." She wants the presidency even more than he does. At the end of this book, before the body is cold, she politics for his Senate seat.

And Morgan? He flies home apparently shriven, preparing for tomorrow's story. Yet on his mythic journey he, and we, have learned little. Anderson had already confessed his failure, the night Morgan first slept with Kathy. But this "ugly truth" lies unexamined on the page. People sleep with each other's spouses. Politicians are ambitious. In an election somebody wins and somebody loses. This big Washington novel, the insider's story by the *Times*' intellectual, provides no more insight than the *Daily News*.

Wicker's problems begin with his opening quote. If the credit automatically belongs to the man in the arena, the novelist need only describe the arena and display a sweaty hero. We are supposed to be satisfied with mere action. We are supposed to empathize with a liberal Senator who lacks any substance. His one cause is for migrant workers. And Wicker does give us a *tour de force* through a filthy, rat-infested camp. Then we are gone and so is Anderson. The workers never appear. Instead they are used by both Anderson and Wicker to win guilty votes and readers. Anderson's fall comes when he comprehends his own base intentions. But intentions do not illuminate enough. whether they are good or bad.

Wicker's women are similarly thin. Morgan idealizes both his own and Anderson's wife. They are cold goddesses. Morgan's wife stab at him because he is such a busy success; Anderson's wife castrates *him* because he is such a pathetic failure. There are no prospects here for male-female communion. Divorce is impossible because of political appearances. Sex becomes a momentary release from continual ambition. What draws these people together only to ruin each other?

No doubt *Facing The Lions* accurately portrays political life. For this we should thank Wicker. Yet even when a bad actor captures false emotions, it doesn't mean the movie is good. We still lack understanding of vital connections: sex to power to class to culturally enforced aspirations. What salvation do these characters seek and what taints them so quickly in the seeking? Why is "the public" so easily manipulated? Whose interests are served by stupid governments that fight only for their re-election? No analysis here. When Anderson exposes a politician as owner of a migrant labor camp, this book almost blows up. Dozens of other such fuses prove duds.

Facing The Lions apparently refers to Anderson. He fights in the arena while Morgan observes from his press box. But Wicker-Morgan is just as compulsively "out there." He wants to find "the riddle of life" "and so wrest from darkness the tiny flame of immortality." Hear Wicker run for the presidency? Because he tries to depict Washington in its own terms, his descriptions must swell into rhetoric. Because he has swallowed whole the liberal's version of the Fall (we *should* be better than we are), his criticisms can induce only guilt to flagellate his characters onward and upward. Wicker sits as far from conventional politics as the Democrats from the Republicans; he is *Newsweek* critiquing *Time*.

Vidal's and Wicker's pictures appear on the backs of their novels; Dotson Rader stares out at us from the front of *Blood Dues*. Rader has been a radical all through the sixties. In the prologue, he dates his movement leftward (and his concurrent rejection of very conservative parents) from the Cuban missle crisis. Quickly he turns from pacifism to national membership in SDS to leadership during (and a book after) the Columbia strike. *Blood Dues* begins with the collapse of SDS at its last convention in July of 1969. As Rader watches Progressive Labor eviscerate the National office, the women's liberationists shout down a Black Panther, he realizes SDS is dead. He admires the Weathermen who emerge; he has always equated revolutionaries with "bikers terrorizing the straight countryside." Yet he can not — whether from cowardice or a literary intelligence — join them. *Blood Dues* chronicles Rader's attempt to forge his own manhood as a radical, to find his own way of serving "the community of victims" as a writer.

With this invocation, Mailer appears. They meet during a dinner party at Senator Javits' Park Avenue apartment. They spar — entertaining while wanting to terrify these bored, morally vacant, left-liberal rich. Rader despises the liberals' complicity and lack of seriousness, but he is just as contemptuous of ultra-serious, old-time leftists. We next tour Communist party headquarters with leader Gus Hall: defeated men sit around tables arguing about revisionists, the trophy case boasts dusty deer antlers presented by the Mongolian CP. Rader's quest for fathers leads him away from party into strange fellowship with Tennessee Williams. Williams is silly about politics; Rader tries to instruct him but they only use each other; Williams' politics lies deep in his art. Many other celebrity encounters follow — with Abbie Hoffman, with Andy Warhol. Rader even returns to the Javitses' to meet

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MICHAEL MARGOLIN

WINTER

These trees are wounds.
Their roots go
a long way down.

From my rented
second-storey window I watch
the white branches bend and break

earthward. Suddenly I see myself, an
old man walking toward the house,
picking up branches as I move.

How warm
this room will be
if I make it,

I think, rushing
downstairs to meet
my remains moving to me,

crying *friend, friend, I have come*
to keep you company.
Whoever you are, wherever you go,

I will be with you always.
I will never let go
of the ache at your root, and of that slow

gravity of time I know
all there is to know
and will teach it to you

so you will never forget.
It will be set
in you as a stone

and by it others will know
how deep is the claim
I have staked out in you.

Yevtushenko. Here at last will be a socialist and free poet! But instead he finds an evasive careerist, making anti-Semitic cracks between melodramatic poetry readings.

Meanwhile the anti-war movement is broke and losing popular support. Rader decides to do his thing and organize a benefit featuring all the famous people he knows. He obtains a cathedral and sets a date, when the same factional troubles erupt. Do-nothing hippies beset his office; the women's caucus won't let any vaguely chauvinist singers, films, or speakers appear. (Rader is aghast when they even try to oust Mailer.) At last the benefit evening arrives and comes off, but the streetpeople guards let anyone in without a ticket and steal the money of those who do pay. The movement is now $9000 deeper in debt.

Rader sees his best radical friends drift into hard drugs and he soon follows. He watches the cops beat up homosexual demonstrators and feels a similar fight inside himself. In biker's leather jacket and boots, he lectures on violence to polite university audiences ("a remedy for alienation," "The revolutionary act of violence was the individual declaring his existence and worth to a system that had reduced him to a commodity"). Authentically violent youth stalk him afterwards; under- and over-privileged teenagers outdo his rhetoric. He tries to father the tough boys and sleep with the tough girls, who remind him of the tough boys. A whore rips him off. He approaches thirty. Jim "The Doors" Morrison dies.

At the end of his rope in New Orleans — with a writer's block, living on credit cards, drunk and drugged — he befriends a starved, hustling streetkid. Simultaneously he reads about the death of Paul Goodman, who had befriended him. They shared a sympathy for runaways and dropouts, the uneducated and untrained. But where Paul could instruct, Dotson can not. "I had no son."

At the further end of his rope in New York — more drink and drugs — Rader's nose begins to bleed. He remembers his suicide attempt at age nineteen in Milwaukee and dreams the same premonitory dreams. One morning the blood will not stop. He staggers to a doctor, then calls Ruth Ford (the actress) and says he is scared to be alone anymore. "I wanted to live. That was enough. In a week I found myself writing again. I was home free."

Blood Dues — self-pitying, narcissistic, so easy to parody — tries to move us by sacrifice. A limb here, an ethic there. The language — cursing with psycho- and sociologese — wants to possess the reader the way Rader is possessed. The celebrity parade — so obviously exploitative — cries out to us in its earnestness. More is revealed in two hundred pages than in Vidal's and Wicker's books, which are twice the length. The tone, the language, the action are desperate. The other novels boast to have been many years in the writing; *Blood Dues* was many years in the living. Rader will offer life itself to dramatize his point.

But what is his point? It must concern rage. Rage at mutilation. (Fear of sexual and mental mutilation.) Rage at capitalist America which demands mutilation. Respect

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for and rage at the literary fathers who have survived that mutilation. Rader is nothing if not angry. He plays with his anger. He taunts, he hustles, he thrives.

Rage appears to be point enough. It is enough to entertain the chic liberals who fête Rader, ask him to speak, and publish his book. Because Rader not only possesses, he understands rage. He is honest enough to call his cowboy act before anyone else:

> "I had always liked young girls. It was the sense of violation I felt with them. They were not competitive. They were weak and unknowledgeable and I was able to get a sense of mastery and command with them I did not experience with older women. I felt the dominant male with whores and young girls. Even when they were not virgins, I liked to imagine them unbroken. It was the sense that I was corrupting them which was exciting."

By young, he doesn't mean twenty; he means 14, 15, 16 year old girls. Wanting to be Dostoevsky, he has become a character out of Dostoevsky. The violence he feels around him justifies his own. He has no program. He uses his talent and presence (which are considerable) to advance as a "radical" in the New York celebrity world. Mailer and Williams are curiously willing to let Rader climb on their backs. But the guards at his benefit rip him off because they smell a Charity Ball.

All of *Blood Dues* is cunning. In two chapters the emotionality seems less manipulated: the sense of betrayal by Yevtushenko, the sense of loss with Goodman's death. Rader has no son because he fears women and has produced nothing of his own. He calls his last chapter "Home Free" as though this voyage had brought him a new maturity. But his experiences have been immediately digested. Goodman's integrity has succumbed to Yevtushenko's facility. The urge to live his life for a book seems, if anything, stronger. Not for the money — it is not that crude. But for the idea of a book. To survive, at anyone's expense, in literary history.

These three books offer the reader descriptive pleasures while depicting eighteenth century, contemporary Washington, and New York literati manners and morals. Yet they advertise so much more that their failures are triply disappointing. What they proclaim (and reviewers accept) as the naked political truth turns out to be self-serving commentary. None of these three authors has understood his own demands on history; consequently their personalities remain in our way. Although Vidal, Wicker, and Rader approximate the style of their obvious mentors, they ultimately misread their mentors and themselves.

Mailer, like Rader, writes self-conscious nightmares wherein ambition and power and violence stalk each other. He too pretends to lay bare his heart while concealing crucial personal (e.g., parental, marital) details. Yet Mailer's needs to dominate are fueled by an outrageous curiosity. His continual race for the presidency is only metaphor; actually he wants to *be* the United States. Though he is fearless and reports back with such integrity, we finally love him because his ego hungers after national transcendence. Rader's lusts are hardly so protean. Again and again he is the "biker terrorizing the straight countryside." Rader has confused mere exposure with radicalism. His violent raids serve only his advancement. Whereas Mailer wants to be America, Rader wants to be Mailer.

Faulkner, like Wicker, is cursed with Southern idealism. Both postulate an earlier and sweeter Eden, then try to comprehend where things went wrong. But in Faulkner, memory collides against memory until avarice and meanness, bigotry and self-hate, incandesce. Antebellum exploitation, slavery, the moment of miscegenation glow within and consume the present. Faulkner celebrates both the past's glories *and* its evils; Wicker owns neither. Thus he can hardly evoke, let alone criticize, his myths. Though he observes the same sordid details as Faulkner, memory merely accumulates like so many 500 word newspaper columns.

Henry Adams, like Vidal, belonged to another century whose passing he mourned without sentimental regret. He too knew the lies filling official history, the stupidity of politicians, the country's lack of civilized life. Moreover the losses of both men seem predestined and beyond all mentioned facts. In his great *Education*, Adams omits his wife's suicide — yet withal his despair feels less displaced than Vidal's. His example is worth our final look.

The grandson and great-grandson of presidents, Adams expected power but couldn't stand to politic for it. He assumed he would be appointed to Grant's reform cabinet; he was passed over by an administration that proved anything but reform. Adams subsequently identified all corruption as the country's repudiation of the Adams' family. Democracy had become the rule of the crass. Then slowly and painfully a further education took place. Adams came to understand how narrow his patrician upbringing had been, how costly his puritan heritage. At the end of his life, Adams saw the symbol of the country's new life in the Dynamo — an awesome force that cared nothing for lineage. Now his personal and our national history fused. With the dignity of a Moses, squeamish anti-Semitic Adams stared down the Dynamo while realizing he would never enter this century.

Gore Vidal also knows the dirty secrets of the past and feels a horror before the present. He too expected to be president, "were it not for this fag thing." But unlike Adams, Vidal's bitterness is unrelieved by insight. All ages and men seem alike because they are usurping his rightful place. No wonder his favorite cause is birth control.

Vidal's dismissal of everyone feels like a dismissal of issues in himself — most obviously the "fag thing" which he tells us is mere choice. We may never know what larger secrets (pains, lusts, identifications) Vidal is hiding, but unless they openly infuse his work he will grow old like Burr without wisdom. He will meet his literary death with acid resignation, but no resolution. □

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Parallels: Black & White

A Natural Death, by Nancy Price. Atlantic-Little, Brown. $8.95.

A first novel that seeks to bring to life a more than century-old portion of slave history from a wilderness-like area of North Carolina, *A Natural Death* draws an ironic parallel between the lives of two young women, one black and one white, whose fate it is to "adjust" to the conditions which cultivated swamps and tilled land into rich and productive plantations.

As history, the novel brings a new dimension to the realities that established the agricultural economy and culture of the Deep South. Ms. Price's poetic sensibilities show the beauty as well as the horror of lands which no one but slaves would willingly attempt to tame. Insect-infested swamps, searing heat and frigid waters, filthy living conditions without adequate food or medicine—all were overcome by slaves whose deaths from disease and violence were compensated for by the production of slave babies, a crop nearly as important as rice.

The cultural evolution of the South is seen in the microcosm of two plantations, Abbotsford and Mockingbird, owned by two brothers, Weston and Muscoe Algrew, and overseen by their dowager Aunt Byrd who seeks to impress Christian manners and cleanliness upon hundreds of enslaved peoples whose primary knowledge is how to survive and to both outwit and imitate their white masters. Ms. Price's careful research attempts to portray accurately the complexity of both racial cultures—a task other white writers have failed at and one which the author is highly sensitive to. The historical accuracy of her book will doubtless be tested as it is examined by black historians and teachers. For my own part, I am impressed by the convincing and non-sentimental portrayal of slaves forced to live the schizophrenic reality of their own Gullah culture which must somehow survive the ways of white masters who were cruelly naive to say nothing of savagely greedy. The irony is that the wilderness South was "civilized" by slaves whose strength and spirit somehow survived and flourished despite the ruthless treatment of white capitalists.

* * *

Ms. Price's poetic talent and love of language are an asset to the novel. The introduction, in which an eccentric old hermit farmer discovers two abandoned and injured black infants in a corn field, is a prose poem that sets the tone and primary characters for the novel:

> The heat sings with flies. Sweat glitters on the small black bodies; the children make no sound but panting breath. They are almost lost in the dimness where they lie . . . Amzi steps into the corn, parts it, and crouches beside the children. Turning the sweat-slick baby over, he swears when he sees her maggoty face, whip-cut from forehead to chin. He slams his hat down in the corn, profanes the father, mother, public and private parts of Christ, then climbs uphill to his cabin, talking to himself, the baby cradled against his linsey shirt . . . .

Later, after bathing and feeding the children, an infant girl and a three-year old boy (who will be Joan and Will in the novel), Amzi King strides angrily to where slaves are encamped for the night.

> They have ground their corn ration; now they bake hoecake in the ashes, rinse it in the river, and eat it with what meat they have: the talk of meat, the dream of meat that is habit and asks nothing of them. Shaking with fever, they watch the dream of bacon sizzle on the fire, and cough and rub their eyes in the veering drift of smoke. They hear the white man on the road before he sees them.
>
> Amzi stops at dark's edge. "Found two nigger babies by my cabin. Boy's ear was sliced off, and the girl's cut up bad about the face. Dyin, maybe. Won't give em back to get cut up again," he says, and turns around, goes back home.

Thus begins a new life for Joan and Will whose "owner" treats them as his own children. Rarely seeing any white people except Amzi, they are reared by him and taught to read the Bible, farm, preserve foods, hunt and weave on his isolated farm in the pine barrens of North Carolina. Foreseeing his impending death, Amzi marries Joan to Will and gives them his name, their freedom, and his farm when they are 15 and 18 years old. Just before his death he takes them to Swinsy's Crossroads to trade resin for a watchdog, and it is in this setting that Joan and Will have their first conscious taste of the cruelty they can expect from the white world. The scene is all the more vivid for its contrast with the almost idyllic tenderness the couple has experienced in their young love and their life with Amzi.

> The dogs retreat to flop down in scrubby hackberry shade. Now a pack of white-haired children are at the wagon wheels, staring up. "Niggers!" They shout to the woman coming up. "Niggers! Aint they all fancied up, Ma?" White children! And this is the first white woman Joan and Will have seen—a woman shapeless as a bag of rocks, bare-footed, wiping her wet hands on her faded dress. She looks at Amzi with a deference he feels is new. "Yer niggers, Mr. King? Light and come in."

It is in this scene also that the young couple sees for the first time black people who are slaves, hears their distinct "Gullah" language, and witnesses the degradation and humiliation the slaves endure. The scene is a dramatic foreshadowing of what is to come for Joan and Will after Amzi dies and they are stolen by slave-catchers, separated, and sold to neighboring plantations on the Pee Dee River.

Abbotsford, the plantation where Joan finds herself thrust into the wretched and filthy "no-man house," is soon to be the new home of Buck Langley, the bride of Weston Algrew. The novelist skillfully structures the story line so that the parallel between Buck's and Joan's wedding nights, and even the two young women's delight with their new homes, is an irony clear to the reader. Joan's "home" is a stinking slave hovel which she immediately begins to scour of its filth. Buck's home is the plantation mansion staffed by more slaves than she can imagine. Both women have their naiveté, as well.

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Joan's efforts to clean her home as she was taught by Amzi results in a humiliating beating by other slave women with whom she must share the house, and who return enraged from the rice swamps to find their territory invaded and put into an order foreign to them. Buck, a girl from a poor but recognized Charleston family whose widowed mother did not keep slaves in the boarding school where Buck assisted as a teacher, must learn from Aunt Byrd how to manage the slaves and be a Christian help-mate to her husband without revealing her dismay and horror at the treatment of the slaves.

Both Joan and Will are outsiders to the slave culture at their separate plantations. Will is flogged because he works harder than the other slaves and may cause a dangerous dissension among them. Joan, whose scar identifies her as different, also has the physical characteristics of a Guinea black—unlike the Gullah blacks by whom she is immediately ostracized. Like Will, she is burdened by the white work ethic which makes her a threat to her fellow workers. The shocked and separated couple is aided by a third outcast, a half-Indian, half-Negro girl named Metchy who arranges meetings between the two and serves as a kind of quiet tutor to educate the couple to the ways of slavery and "field-nigger" life.

With a richness of detail and language, Ms. Price weaves an intricate plot that eventually finds Will replacing the black "driver" who serves as foreman to the field workers at Mockingbird plantation, and finds Joan living in the weaving house at Abbotsford where she is to instruct other slave women in the making of fabric. The parallel story line of Buck is developed primarily through the letters she writes to her sister in Charleston which reveal her conflicts about her new life as the "mistis" at Abbotsford, and her gradual conformity to that role.

* * *

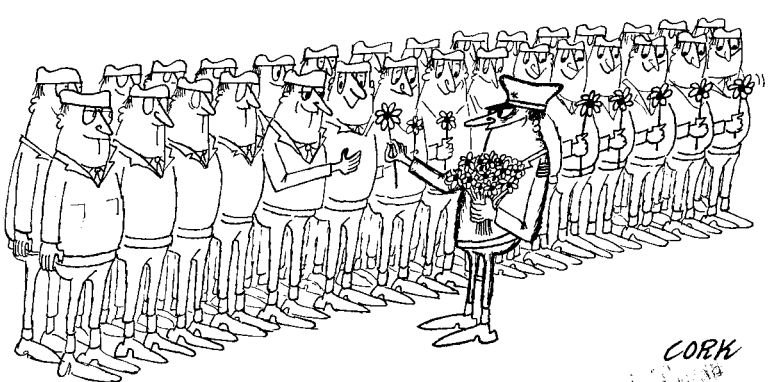
The weaknesses of the novel show up in scenes between Will and Joan when they complain about the filth and work habits of their fellow slaves, and have difficulty understanding why the slaves cannot rise to the pride and dignity they possess. While both begin to recognize the paradox —they wish the blacks to develop values which will only further the power of the white masters—nonetheless the almost whining righteousness of the couple detracts from the credibility of their characters earlier in the novel. The character development of Buck and her life in the plantation, however, is not as well drawn as that of Joan and Will's. The letters she writes her sister seem authentic in the language of the 1850s, but they are too clearly a technique for somewhat laborious information-giving. Buck's scenes with her husband are, for me, too self-consciously precious and lacking in credibility. Her character is best realized, I think, when she tours the plantation for the weekly visits with the slaves.

The Gullah dialect used by the slaves adds both a richness and a burden to the novel. Most certainly it helps to develop the authenticity of the slave culture and characters. But at times it is confusing when it is used to explain certain settings, and leaves the reader somewhat confused about what is actually going on. Ms. Price knowingly took on a difficult and demanding task when she chose to use the dialect, and if the book is revised, some of those difficulties may be worked out to her advantage while still preserving the effectiveness of the language.

* * *

I have omitted a discussion of some of the other colorful characters in the novel: Mam Jeel, a senile black woman who was once a house servant and believes herself to be the mistress of Abbotsford; Solomon, a young boy whose father was apparently white and who was sold to Abbotsford at the same time Joan was; Pop, a "house nigger" who runs away to work in the fields with her man because she loves the swamps and beauty of the wilderness. This latter character is probably overdrawn, but represents the author's determination to portray the richness and complexity of the slave community. Perhaps she could have made more use of Solomon, another outcast, whose death at the turning point of the novel symbolizes the final "adjustment" to the inhumane culture forced upon Joan, Will and Buck.

It is this turning point which suggests the fine potential of Nancy Price as a novelist. The scene begins in Joan's weaving shack; her husband, Will, has come for an evening visit and we see his frustration at being separated from her, at not being able to provide her with a good home, at the slaves who will live only as slaves and cannot grasp his work ethic value system. We also see Joan's disgust at the behavior of the "house niggers" and their laziness and cheat-



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ing, and we recognize that her self confidence and pride are nearly destroyed. Their despair and the paradox of their plight is only slightly abated when Joan lets Will know she carries his child.

Later, Will leaves her sleeping to return to his own slave quarters to make the nightly count of his people. There he finds a celebration under way to honor him for persuading the plantation owner to give the slaves their own pigs. He becomes drunk on moonshine whiskey and in his frustration begins to preach from Revelations. The orgiastic evangelism carries Will and the slaves into the woods to the two pig pens built with such pride and anticipation earlier that day, and there the two brood sows are slaughtered and devoured, and Will falls into drunken sleep with a slave woman. When he awakens he is confronted by a runaway slave, Blackjack, whose mocking scorn drives home the realization that Will has been broken by the pressures of both the slaves and the white system. In the scene that follows, a hung-over and confused Will succumbs to the slaves' worshipful request that he give them their own written names, perhaps as the angel in Revelations gives the faithful their new names written on a white stone.

The naming scene has its ironic parallel in an epilogue chapter in which the slaves at Abbotsford are called together to celebrate the birth of Buck and Weston's son, and to receive names for their own new slave babies from the master. Joan, now the wet nurse for Buck's baby, mutely watches as her own son is given the name of Amzi, and hears herself referred to as Joan d'Arc. In the child-like performances each slave makes for a packet of sugar or tobacco, we see all as martyrs to the social and economic oppression of the magnificent South.

Nancy Price is clearly a talented and insightful writer. Her ability as a novelist will doubtless mature as she wrestles with a craft that can contain her quite marvelous grasp of historic irony and her sensibility to language and character.

—*Loree Rackstraw*

If we are not stimulated by triviality . . . let us feast at the table of the gods!

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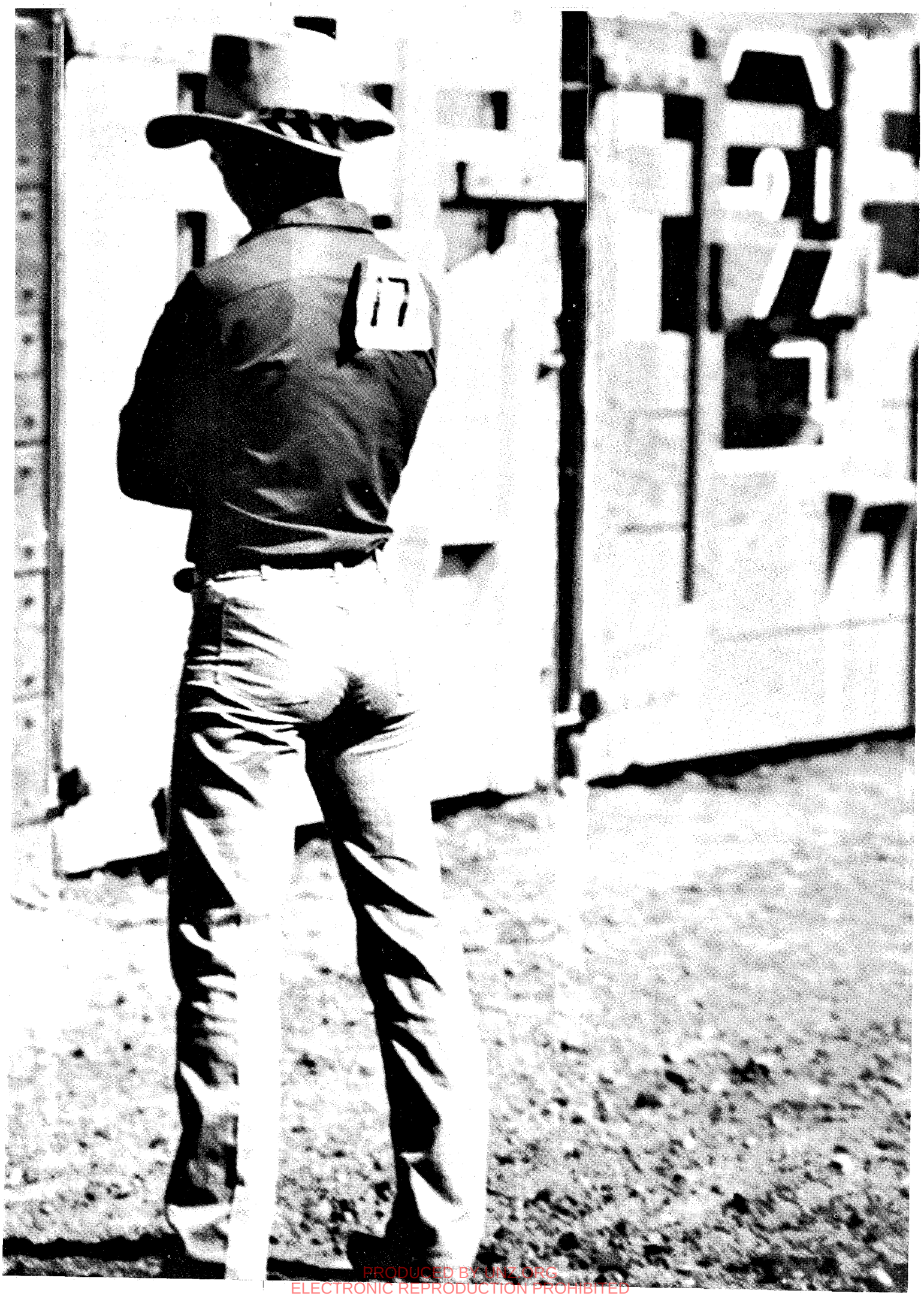

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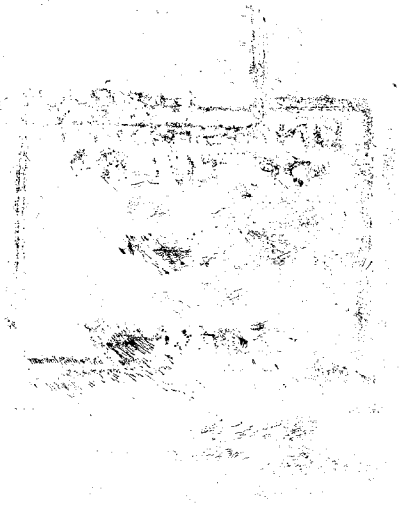

The industrial-growth system, common to both Western and Eastern Europe, as well as to North America and Japan, is not only tapping the resources and breaking down ecosystems, but it is building up *social instability* at an accelerating pace. It is transforming people's way of living so as to make them even more *dependent* upon a continuous ecocrisis. A parallel "adjustment" — at least as disruptive — is inflicted upon the societies and culture of the developing countries, not only through neo-imperialism, but through so-called "development aid": projects requiring societies miraculously to thrive after having had their cultural roots severed.

—Sigmund Kvaløy

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